

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

INFORMATIONAL BOOKS

WRITING AS THERAPY

WORD LADDERS IN READING

GROUP REMEDIAL TEACHING



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ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

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No. 3

Informational Books -- Tonic and Tool for the Elementary Classroom

HERBERT S. ZIM¹

There is no single panacea for all our educational ills, yet the new informational books which are appearing more and more in classrooms all over the country have the lure of such a promising cure-all. The publishers do not ballyhoo them as "good for man or beast," but several years of school experience show they are good for teachers as well as for pupils. These books are prying us loose from some of our firm convictions about grade placement. They are offering a new challenge to the slow learner. They even imply questions about cherished concepts of curriculum and classroom management. And with the challenge and the questions comes the clear indication that while these are not the educational equivalent of "Old Dr. Sousses Herb Compound," they are a spring tonic for the classroom and all who reside therein.

What Are "Informational" Books?

Informational books are hard to describe or define. In essence all books, from Shakespeare's *Sonnets* to the local telephone directory, are informational. But the books that have caught the attention of children, teachers, and librarians in re-

cent years are a more narrowly defined group. They are obviously non-fiction; however, biographies, histories, and similar books are not usually classified in the informational category. The term does not usually refer to textbooks either—and certainly not to the readers, spellers, and arithmetic books that crowd a pupil's desk, if not his mind. Yet, textbooks have been used as informational books in many modern classrooms. Informational books are more than "how-to" books, though this branch of the family cannot be completely disowned. One has the feeling that the term, while ill-defined, is best suited to the scores of well-written, well-illustrated books on factual subjects for young readers; books which children voluntarily choose for hobby and recreational reading though they may often use them in the classroom as well.

Informational books are not restricted to any subject or group of subjects. However, if science is broadly defined, one can

¹Professor Zim, of the University of Illinois, is himself a well-known author of such informational books as *Birds*, *Stars*, *Owls*, *Thunder and Lightning*, and more than a score of others.

say with reasonable justification that the majority of informational books are scientific. Perhaps this is a reflection of my own myopic viewpoint, since I am more interested in science education. Perhaps it reflects the many books on nature study and such naive volumes as the "*Boy's Home Book of Chemical Experiments*" and their ilk which were the precursors of those we now use. At any rate, the mushroom growth in the number and popularity of informational books has mycelial threads penetrating back into time for twenty-five years and more. Some of these early books set a pattern and suggested standards which have done much to make present-day books as good as they are. Frank M. Chapman's *The Travels of Birds* (Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1916) was an expert's attempt to explain bird migration to children. Dr. Chapman did the job accurately and directly, rightfully assuming that something as interesting as his subject did not require window dressing or sugarcoating. Other books of this period (mostly nature study) did about as good a job as Chapman, though the period itself is characterized by sentimental, anthropomorphic animal stories. But it was not until the '30's with books like Reed's *The Stars for Sam* (Harcourt, 1931), Baruch and Reiss *My Body and How It Works* (Harper, 1934), and Ilin's *What Time Is It?* and *100,000 Whys* (Lippincott, 1932, 1933) that the real development of informational books began.

A systematic survey of informational books is not a chore to take on lightly. One difficulty lies in the fact that a goodly number do not fit the usual pigeonholes of school subjects. Is a book like Schneider's

Lets Look Under the City (Scott, 1950) to be considered social studies or science—or both? How about Vera Edelstat's prose-poem *Oceans in the Sky* (Knopf, 1946)? It's certainly science—but it's a good deal more besides. This difficulty is in itself a hopeful sign. It indicates that some authors are less concerned with writing science, industrial arts, or social studies books than in tackling a specific, significant idea for children and doing their best with it. They stake their bet on a child wanting to have and use an attractive book about something that interests him, in contrast to offering him a general book on an artificial school subject. Another difficulty in appraisal of these books is that they are coming off the press faster and faster. My own home-made list notes 68 published in 1951—and by the time the count is complete and totalled it is likely to be well over a hundred. There are probably over five hundred informational books in print and at least half that number are worthy of teachers' special attention.

Perhaps of more value than a survey is a further look at the characteristics of the informational books that are appearing today. These characteristics may help teachers recognize the books appearing in 1952 or '53, or '54, though, in all fairness, the teacher is not likely to need a check-list to help her. She will probably look at the book and have it reasonably appraised by the time she has thumbed through it. But since informational books, as a group, may be of more than usual importance in modern education, this detailed inspection is justified. If it is to be a glimpse, it is fair to begin with what first strikes the eye

—the outstanding illustrations in many, if not most informational books.

The Role of Illustrations

The best of the informational books have that happy blend of text and illustration that fully supplement each other. The illustrations are not pictures added to the text, but an integral part of the book. The reader does not scurry from text to illustrations, so the second will clarify the first or vice versa. The content and placement of the illustration both complements and supplements the text. In books like Bronson's *Turtles* (Harcourt, 1945), the illustrations add considerably to the factual story and the reader learns from both. Some books make admirable use of full color, like Jannette May Lucas' *Where did your Garden Grow* and *First the Flower, Then the Fruit* (Lippincott, 1939, 1943). Others do equally well without color (Dorothy Hogner, *The Animal Book* and *Farm Animals*; Oxford, 1942, 1945) and some go in between, doing yeoman's work with a single or two colors—H. and N. Schneider, *You Among the Stars* (Scott, 1950) and most of Irma Webber's books, especially *Up Above and Down Below* (Scott, 1943). When photographs are used, authors like Stack (*Asbestos, Radium, Aluminum* etc.—Harpers, 1941, 1940, 1942) and Kane (*Wild World Tales*—Knopf, 1949) have used their cameras well. Even the books that are not outstanding are often marked by good, illustrations and some, especially those for older children, have done a good job with a minimum of graphic treatment.

It may sound presumptive to assert that most informational books are well

written, but they are. Since many are short books, the author has had to choose each word for maximum effect. It is surprising how much information can be packed into a text that is only three to five thousand words long. Robert McClung has done well in *Wings in the Woods*, *Sphinx*, *Ruby Throat*, and *Stripe* (Wm. Morrow, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951). So has Jeanne Bendick in *How Much and How Many* (Whittlessey, 1947) and in all her other books. Many more examples might be added. Good informational writing for children is an art. On the whole the authors of modern informational books have done well.

The advances which they have made can only be appreciated by comparing these newer books with those more common a generation ago. A common device in those benighted days was to use some nondescript characters like Johnny and the Old Professor, or little Tim and his uncle the aviator, to tell whatever facts needed telling. The erudite expert and his juvenile straight man are gone forever. Nowadays the facts are presented for what they are worth and if they are not interesting, it will take more than testimony by the Old Professor to turn the trick. Another device which is fast disappearing involves wild animals whose family life and habits resemble closely those of the normal middle class American citizens of unblemished reputation. Such anthropomorphisms are no longer considered necessary or even "cute." They are recognized for what they really are, distortions of the animal's life history which often cover up our ignorance of how the animal really lives. They have no place in informational books.

The Content of Informational Books

It goes without saying that most modern informational books are accurate—scientifically accurate. But is accuracy needed? What does accuracy mean in books like these? Certainly it is not the same level of accuracy that the scientist uses, where the recording of every detail is important so others can verify his experiments. The accuracy toward which most informational books are directed is a level of accuracy to meet—or perhaps slightly exceed—the needs of the reader. Accuracy, then, is closely correlated to the purpose the information will serve. To this end, unnecessary details are omitted, but at the same time the subject is not reduced to a mass of ambiguous generalities. If anything is slighted, it is the generalities. The writer of informational books always uses specific facts to make his story clear and precise. This judicious selection of factual material, avoiding both unnecessary detail and uninteresting generalities, has been the touchstone of these books. They are, without a doubt, more accurate than books for children have ever been—and more functional too. •

There is difficulty in separating the matter of accuracy from the specific contents of informational books. But it is important to stress that *specificity* is a characteristic of them. Not only are they specific, but modern informational books cover a wide range of subjects. Fewer general and encyclopedic volumes appear. Children's interests are specific and specific books on whales, alligators, snakes or ants are more accepted than an animal omnibus. Books the now written for children on topics that not so long ago no one

would have dreamed of touching below the college level. The surprising and important fact is that such information is wanted, accepted, and used by youngsters.

Leaving for a while the implications of this for the school, it is worth noting the availability of such books as John B. Lewellen's *You and Atomic Energy* and his *You and Space Travel* (Children's Press, 1949, 1950). Jeanne Bendick has explained about television and so has Kingdon Tyler (*Telecasting and Color*; Harcourt, 1946). Ethel Berkeley's *Ups and Downs* (Scott, 1951) is a first book about space. There are, in informational books for children, facts on human reproduction and genetics, atomic structure, weather forecasting, conservation of wildlife, volcanoes and earthquakes, microscopic life, and a dozen other equally erudite topics—each, in these cases, made explicitly clear to children on a level they can understand and use. The success of these books dealing with such a wide variety of topics has helped deal a death-blow to the naive idea that children are interested only in simple, common, easy-to-understand, everyday things.

Experiments and Activities

Finally, many of the informational books suggest experiments and activities for the reader. These are not mere gestures to provide busywork in the classroom. In the case of the science books at least, they open the way for individual pupil participation, so that Henry's entire experience in finding out about chemicals becomes a rounded educational whole. The combination of activity and purposeful reading that the informational books supply is hard to beat as a method of learning. Some

informational books are devoted almost entirely to activities. Mae and Ira Freeman's *Fun with Science* and *Fun with Chemistry* (Random 1943, 1944) are best known of this type of book. Beeler and Branley's *Experiments in Science, Experiments with Electricity*, and *Experiments in Optical Illusion* (Crowell, 1947, 1949, 1951) are worth using too. Other good examples are Mildred Selsam's *Play with Plants*, *Play with Trees* and *Play with Vines* (Morrow, 1948, 1949, 1950). The books which include science or other activities as part of the text are legion. Activities for children are naturally limited in some areas (e. g. disease) but the number of things authors have devised for children to do is astonishing.

If you have read so far without beginning to feel that there is something unique and intriguing in the newer informational books, then my points have been poorly made. Looking over informational books for the past five years or so, a movement seems to be in the making—a movement to give children information they want in a way they can use. It represents a more realistic attempt to meet some of the needs and interests of children than most elementary textbooks have made. The textbooks are written for a captive audience. When the teacher says "open your arithmetic book to page 147", there is little else the class can do. Informational books, on the other hand, stand in open competition with all the other kinds of books a child might use—and with all the other activities that compete for his time. When the child uses them voluntarily in school, or take them home from the library, the choice itself is not mean measure of the book's value.

Books and the Curriculum

All this should imply that informational books have a value in the classroom as well as in the home and library. Their value ties in closely with the newer concepts of the curriculum. In schools today there is a new freedom. Some teachers are using it to develop dynamic programs for their pupils. Many more teachers are somewhat at a loss with this freedom. Some continue teaching as they have taught before. Some teachers, who make an attempt at including new materials and activities, are disappointed because they feel at loose ends and sees only meager results. In such situations it is common to find that a teacher has ventured into a new project or unit without adequate preparation. She soon discovers that she has little for the pupils to *do* except sending them to the library on "research." Reading and writing reports as a steady diet soon palls and discipline problems are in the making.

The area of elementary science is one of the newer areas of the curriculum where teachers feel insecure and lacking in their training. Units of work may easily go astray. For some teachers the solution is close dependence on the textbook. Others find they can relax and learn with their pupils. If these teachers have a textbook they use it as a resource book or an informational book, not as a book to be studied page by page. The kinds of information and activities suggested in many of the books previously cited are admirably suited to problems which come up in the classroom or which the group plans to study. Teachers who use their text and these supplementary books together, find them a basis for a program that has a real chance to succeed.

Informational books are not a panacea for the classroom, but they certainly help. Besides giving the program enrichment and activity, the informational books are a boon to the teacher with slow readers. A goodly number of informational books have been written for younger readers and are printed in large type. However, neither the content nor the illustrations is typical of a "baby" book. The slow reader in the middle or upper grades will willingly tackle the simple story of a chipmunk, an airplane, or lightning while he will balk at the primer that seems to repeat "See Susan run" *ad infinitum*.

Because of their rich specific content, many informational books appeal to a much wider range of readers than one might suspect. And because they are not graded like textbooks, the young boy interested in alligators or in jet planes will pick the best book he can find and will do his darndest to read it. Conversely the older pupil who picks up the same books and who is attracted by the illustrations, will not hesitate to read from cover to cover (usually in 15 minutes) a book set in clear primer type. Even parents are using and enjoying some of the informational books prepared for their young offspring.

The range of material treated in informational books is having its effects on classroom practice also. Teachers broaden their horizons using these books. They see that they can reach the same educational goals through a study of whales as through some more common and less exciting animal. Some of the books dealing with people such as Eva Knox Evans *All About Us* and *People are Important* (Capitol, 1947, 1951) and Sonia Bleeker's admirable

series on Indian tribes (*Indians of the Longhouse, The Apache Indians, The Sea Hunters, etc.* Morrow, 1950, 1951, 1951) are all valuable tools in developing improved human relationships in and out of the classroom. Many of the informational books like those of Schneider or Fenton, can enrich the social studies program. A music teacher found James GERALTON's *The Story of Sound* (Harcourt, 1948) a real help in explaining to her pupils how instruments worked.

The technique of teachers themselves using children's books is something that should not be overlooked. Teachers are usually busy people. They want to keep abreast of the times and yet may not have the background or ability to cope with material prepared by specialists. By using some of the up-to-date informational books an elementary teacher can quickly, and with relative ease, gain some command of simple data about atomic energy or whatever she will. If she needs a deeper insight, or develops a further interest from what she had read, she will find more advanced books for the intelligent adult reader, which she can sit down and work her way through. There is nothing derogatory in implying that the teacher whose job involves all of elementary education with its own specialized background, should not necessarily want to tackle books on natural history, economics, or chemistry on the same level that she does education or child development. Many a teacher would profit by using these informational books more, and the encyclopedias less. The classroom teacher who wants to use and enjoy the freedom of the modern classroom has to learn to efficiently gather information and materials with which she

and her pupils can work. Informational books are a good part of the answer.

Concluding Statement

I cannot conclude this praise of informational books (which seem to offer a grass-roots technique for improving classroom teaching) without striking one blow at a fallacious nine-headed dragon. This blue-nosed creature with an icy breath holds that the widespread use and popularity of informational books and the related interest of the child in the realities of his world are slowly destroying beauty, fantasy, imagination, and poetry. A few educators and critics who should know better have echoed these sentiments. What nonsense! There is no problem of Reality versus Fantasy or Information versus Poetry. No one has to decry the myth, fable, legend, or story of adventure in letting the child discover that

the real world around us is also full of wonder, beauty, and things more strange and curious than one can imagine.

Under reasonable guidance, children's choice and use of books usually reach a normal balance. Interest in the comics doesn't last forever. A good story, well told, will have the rapt attention of any boy and girl. The literary diet usually becomes balanced. But in the growing-up process more and more contact with reality is essential. Children who make an early positive contact which helps in the understanding of the machines, tools, and devices, people and other living things around them are taking easier and bigger steps toward maturity. Their vision does not become limited, but becomes wider and deeper. The schools and all teachers have a duty in this regard. The use of informational books in growing numbers makes this duty a happy one.

Writing as Therapy

ALVINA TREUT BURROWS¹

In its therapeutic function writing continues a service to personality which was begun in infancy by oral language. The release of tension through communicating one's feelings to interested humans begins as early as a baby's crying. The physiology of this diffusion of tension has been carefully presented by Frank in his essay "The

Management of Tensions."² In treating human development as the learning of acceptable solutions for the release of many kinds of tensions, Frank links the use of sounds and words with the relief of hunger and other physical discomforts. In referring to mothers' comforting vocalizations, Frank says:

¹Dr. Burrows is assistant professor of Education at New York University. This paper was read at the annual convention of the National Council of Teachers of English, Cincinnati, November 23, 1951.

²Frank, Lawrence K. *Society as the Patient*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1949.

It should be noted that the mother usually accompanies these tactual ministrations with soothing auditory stimuli, thus providing the essentials for conditioning the child to use auditory stimuli in place of tactual stimuli as sources of adjustment.³

³Ibid., pp. 121-122.

The response learned in babyhood that mother's placating, solacing voice can be the forerunner of food, warmth, and comfort is itself a forerunner of the sympathy children later need and expect from other adults.

The use of language as a vehicle of emotional need is a normal one in human development. In early childhood the expression of emotion, so often accompanied by vigorous physical activity, must of course be oral. Crying, babbling, shouting, talking are the progressions of language growth through which we learn to solve the basic tensional problems of childhood. Other persons are involved in this orbit of oral release and communication from the very beginning.

In later years at least a part of this function of achieving and maintaining tensional equilibrium can be taken over by the more precise instrument of writing. That it so rarely serves this need is a sad loss to many of our citizenry.

If it be true that curricula are designed to assist the development of wholesome personality, a proposition to which this National Conference is dedicated, then we must continue to seek fresh insights into the ways by which writing can serve children therapeutically. This does not imply that teachers become pseudopsychiatrists. Nor must writing be perverted from its normal function of communication. Indeed, it is entirely within this function that writing best serves children by releasing strain, by gaining for them a responsive, satisfying audience, by empowering them to manipulate their characters with au-

thority instead of being always the recipients of authority. The better we can learn to enhance children's successful communication, by that much will children be better able to meet the strains of family and school living and the necessary strains which are a part of growing in our culture.

One need only look at a few hundred freely written stories of elementary age children to see how often conflict is the prime ingredient. Of these conflicts food is often a storm center. The following story dictated by a second grader is but one illustration of negative feelings about food.

THE DOG WHO DIDN'T LIKE BISCUITS*

Once upon a time there was a dog who didn't like dog biscuits. One day his owner said, "You eat these dog biscuits." The dog barked and growled. The owner was mad and walked back to the house.... The man thought to himself, "Why doesn't the dog like dog biscuits?" The man went to bed. In the morning the dog woke his owner up and his owner came out and he said, "Why did you wake me up?" The dog pulled his pant leg. So the owner followed the dog and the dog showed him something. It was a skunk. He was trying to tell him that's why he didn't want to eat the dog biscuits.

Harry age 7

March Gr. II

The end

In this same room, one in which children have many wholesome ways of releasing their aggressive feelings, the same theme constituted the spontaneous subject matter of three out of four dramatic play groups in a half hour's observation.

**The Dog Who Didn't Like Biscuits* and *The Three Rabbits*, dictated by children in Grade II Plandome Road School, Manhasset, New York. Marjorie Tibbo, teacher; Dr. Arthur Hamalanen, principal.

Getting such felings out in the open through dramatization or down on paper for a listening audience constitutes a tensional release more mature than crying over the difficulty, more rewarding than merely complaining. The hero with whom the writer identifies—and the child audience as well—rises triumphant over his adversaries. Being in the role of authority over one's characters is a vicarious and constructive way of balancing the scores. That children use such media spontaneously, often violently, with no hint of self-consciousness is all the more evidence of their essential need. Another story from a child in the same group presents this all too frequent source of conflict even more boldly:

THE THREE RABBITS

Once upon a time there were three little rabbits. They did not like carrots so they went out to play. They went into their house to get some cake. They ate it all up and then they went up to bed. Their father spanked them because they ate the cake.

Jim age 7

The end

March Grade II

Older children, too, have scores to balance. Resistance to adults is a necessary expression of personal need. Clashes among characters are not pathological symptoms, else they would not be considered here. They are normal representations of experience in normal growth away from the parental dependence of early childhood in the direction of inter-dependence with one's fellows. Fundamental as is this re-orientation, it is not surprising that revolt against authority finds its way into the outpourings of even happy, capable, successful older children. Sally, who was outstanding in many phases of school and family life, put some of this necessary revolt against authority into a gaily con-

structed plot. You will note the adroit manipulation of the worms, their flagrant disobedience, their punishment and their Horatio Alger rewards!

THREE BAD WORMS AND THREE GOOD CHILDREN**

There were once three little worms who lived under a big flat stone near a big house. And in this house lived three little girls. Now the three little girls were very afraid of the worms and the worms were very bad worms so the little girls had reason to be afraid of them. Now let me tell you something, everything, on earth has a fairy godmother including worms. So the worms' fairy godmother went to see the worms and said, "You are very bad worms and something must be done about it. If you don't stop being bad I will have to do something drastic." And she flew away. But the worms did not take heed to her warning and they kept right on doing very bad things, worse than they had ever done before.

One day the three little girls went walking and to their surprise not one of them were afraid to go near the flat stone under which the worms lived. And to the worms' surprise *they* were afraid of the little girls. What was the thing that had come over the little girls and the worms? Well I must have forgotten to tell you the fairy godmother was a woman of her word. She had done something drastic. The children went up to the worms and they were just going to step on the worms when the worms' fairy godmother appeared and spoke the same words she had spoken before. But the worms were having so much fun climbing up the children's legs that they didn't hear their fairy godmother. So the children took the worms off their legs and stepped on them.

That's the fate of things that don't listen to their mothers or fairy godmothers. But the fairy godmother was a forgiving woman and she sent the worms to heaven

**Kensington School, Great Neck, Long Island, New York. Clara Malcolmson, teacher; Marguerite Johnson, principal.

for one day. They reformed and lived happily ever after and so did the little girls. One of the worms became the president of the worms's association in heaven and the girls I've heard are very well off, too. One of them is a president's wife and I believe one of them turned out to be a famous drawer and the other is a very happy mother and has three children.

Salley 9 years

Grade 4

The delight which her fourth grade associates showed in the charmingly balanced story was as satisfying to Sally as was her sense of power in manoeuvring a fitting conclusion for the wicked worms, who came off about as well as did the three sisters. Juvenile identification with animal life is so frequent as to be worthy of serious observation. By using animals as characters children are free to put adults into ridiculous positions, to regulate affairs in ways that satisfy constructively their need for power.

Thus it appears that stories, drama, verse are not only art forms. They offer opportunities for the projection of personal power to a sympathetic listener. The interaction of writer and audience is reciprocal, active, releasing. Imaginative, subjective expression, it would seem, can serve emotional needs as a stabilizing, constructive force. But other kinds of written expression also serve personality development. Utilitarian writing also offers fortification and assurance. This more objective expression often clarifies and structures ideas, gives opportunity for pride in workmanship, and for social approval. Intellectual honesty and effective organization of ideas can add to stature.

Some children earn prestige with their group by writing clearly and well the

letters, signs, notices, captions, or explanations that bring results in class affairs. Care in spelling, punctuation, and appearance are essential, for the product is a link between producer and consumer. Janice in a third grade took special pains with the letter she wrote to the shop teacher asking his help in building a rabbit hutch. Her concluding sentence—"We have some wood but we hope you have lots more." . . . wisely left certain strategic details for personal conference. Janice was willing to have her first draft checked for spelling and mechanics in order that her second draft be practically perfect.

All children in an active classroom can share in some of these tasks, some find their greatest gratification in those writing jobs by which they extend their own effectiveness and serve others. Pride in accomplishment, so often lost in our assemblyline scheme of things, is a natural by-product of writing an effective letter, a courteous request, a clear explanation of a class exhibit. Time in class to gloat over the finished copy, to notice specific items well attended to, is time well spent, for it underscores the social importance of these correct observances. It is a curious thing that children are often more affected by the respect given to their written products by their well-known classmates than they are impressed by the potential approval of a distant recipient.

Alan, who was known for his impatience in one sixth grade, toiled mightily over his first and second draft of a report on forest fires. He cared about it because group interest in forestry had developed momentum through class pursuits before individuals took off on long term report-

(Continued on Page 149)

"Climbing the Word Ladder" in Reading

E. W. DOLCH¹

Modern beginning reading books are among the most attractive in the world. They are beautifully printed and bound and on every page is a picture in full color. The best artists lavish their efforts on these books for the little children. The purpose is to make reading attractive. But *making reading attractive is not enough.*

The content of beginning reading books is highly interesting to the children. The children in the books do the things that all children of their age would like to do. There are all kinds of activities and adventures. The beginners using the books burst out in comment on the pictures and stories. Language is developed and the group takes part in activities which help to make it a social unit. Thinking is stimulated. But *child development, however desirable, is not enough.*

Frankly, behind all the attractive pictures and interesting subject matter, the purpose of the basic reader is to teach sight vocabulary. The standard beginning method is the sight method, and this means instant recognition of words as wholes. And the words to be recognized are the words used in the readers. To ensure that these words will be learned, they are doled out, two or three to the page; they are repeated immediately; they are repeated later; they are repeated from book to book. In short, the words used are the words to be learned.

Each reading series introduces to the children what is in effect a "word ladder."

¹Professor of Education, The University of Illinois, and author of numerous works on the teaching of reading.

As just explained, every device is used to cause these words to be learned as sight words. And it has been found in practice that if a child learns the words as they are doled out, book by book, he does become a reader. That is, if he climbs the word ladder successfully, he is a success in reading. If he does not, he is a failure. He may find the reading books attractive, but he still is a failure in reading. He may be developed in language, socialization, and in thinking, but he is still a failure in reading. Nothing takes the place of climbing the word ladder to acquire a sight vocabulary.

To see what sort of a job is thus presented to the children, we should look at the word ladders in modern readers. In Table I we present the *new* words per book as issued by five large publishers. Of course, it is understood that the *total* words

TABLE I
New words per book in Five
Standard Series of Basic Readers.

	Series				
	A	B	C	D	E
Preprimers	55	54	78	60	58
Primer	141	99	141	129	127
First Reader	169	158	255	163	180
First Second Reader	170	188	73	295	260
Second Second Reader	129	231	387	146	340
First Third Reader	256	306	36	460	404
Second Third Reader	222	372	502	325	501
	Total				
	1142	1408	1472	1568	1870

in each book also include the words from previous books which the child is presumed to know already. If, unfortunately, the child has not learned the words in the previous books, those words then become new words to him in the book he is attempting to read. Thus, for most children, the number of words *they find to be new* is much larger than the numbers given in the table.

To repeat, these are the numbers of *new* words on each step of the word ladders *if the child has learned all previously introduced words*. But most children have not learned all previously introduced words. Some have learned nearly all, some about half, some only a few. Therefore the steps in the word ladder are for most children considerably harder than this table suggests. Yet the main point is, *the child must climb the word ladder to become a reader*.

Here we must say that some teachers and some systems do not depend on the word ladder of the basic reader. Instead, they pin their faith on the teaching of word attack or phonics. Such plans succeed under only two conditions (1) if the children start at seven years mental age and (2) if they will work diligently at phonics, which is a hard subject for children. Because of the need for these two conditions, the plan of using phonics instead of a sight word ladder does not succeed with *ordinary* children in *ordinary* schools. Hence nearly all schools depend first on climbing the sight word ladder, taking up phonics gradually later.

We must now ask the question, what should the teacher do with the children who have not climbed the word ladder,

that is, with the children who have learned only two-thirds of the words in the readers, or only half the words or less? In the past the answer was simple: make them repeat the grade. That answer is also used in many schools today, but it is usually the wrong answer, for many reasons that we cannot here discuss. Instead, most schools each year send most children on to the next grade. Let us therefore consider here only the situation in the school which sends the children on, no matter whether they have succeeded in learning sight vocabulary or not.

Incidentally, we should remind ourselves that this problem of the child who does not climb the word ladder is consistently ignored in many quarters. For instance, the manuals of the basic readers never say, "For those children who have learned only half our words, do so-and-so." Every basic reader makes the assumption that every child learns every word. Certainly a naive assumption. Secondly, many school administrations refuse to see the problem of the child who has not climbed the word ladder. They pretend that all children have learned "enough" to go on, and they give them new books and put them up against harder work just as if they had all learned the words they are supposed to have learned.

To repeat our question then, what can a teacher do who is presented with children who have not climbed the word ladder to the point where, by the curriculum, they are supposed to have climbed, or who have forgotten many or most of the words they had partially learned last year? Since volumes could be written on this problem, we can here only sketch the possibilities. The individual teacher will

use whichever methods seem most possible in her situation:

1. *Review the book used last year.* In the fall the group, or part of it, can take up the same book they used in the spring, but in an entirely different way. Let the children hunt for favorite stories to be read as audience reading. Let stories be compared. Let stories be reviewed for any of many reasons, to find out why they were liked, to select favorite characters or incidents, to choose a story for dramatizing, and so on. During this review, children will pick up many words they missed the former year.

2. *Go on with the next book,* but plan to teach *all* the words and not just those supposed to be "new." The manual assumes "old" words are known, but the teacher need not assume they are. She can plan that *all* the children will be told *all* the words. She can do this by having the material read *orally* by the good readers, and then have parts *reread* orally by the poor readers in answer to questions such as "What did Tom say?", "What sentence tells what kind of a tree it was?" and so on. Oral reading *tells all the children all the words*. Other teaching systems tell them only a few. And this oral reading has to come *first*, so that children are not asked to "read silently" what they cannot read at all. This kind of oral reading is very common in the schools.

3. *Give the "slow group" an easier book of another series.* This is a widely used device but often does not consider the problem facing the children. To the teacher, one second grade book is as easy as another second grade book, but not to the children. There is great difference in

vocabulary between books of different series. An "easy book of another series" may not be easy for the children because of the difference between series. That is, this plan puts the children across on to another word ladder, and they are not prepared for it because they have not had the lower books in that ladder. Therefore a "slow group" in the third grade may find the second reader of another series as hard as the third reader of their own series. This fact may explain why many "slow groups," given new books of other series, do not progress as they are expected to. If given books on another word ladder, they should perhaps go back two steps instead of one to find a book really easy enough for them.

4. *Give the "slow children" review in the important words in their own word ladder.* Suppose a child gets to third grade but has missed half the words in his word ladder. Let us refer to our table of word ladders provided by five prominent series and see what that would mean. If a child reached third grade knowing only half the sight vocabulary he is supposed to have learned, he would not have learned the total up to the third grade, which ranges from 600 to 900 words, but would know only half, or from 300 to 450 words. In other words, he would be 300 to 450 words behind his fellows who had successfully climbed the word ladder. Obviously, the third grade teacher cannot set out to teach these 300 to 450 words. They are too many. But she can give review on *the important words*.

What are the important words? *First* of all, they are *not* the nouns. Nouns change with every change of story or sub-

ject matter. So old nouns do not fit so well into new stories, in spite of the program of repetition used by all the readers. Yet it is just the nouns which the slow group learn. This is because nouns can be pictured and are pictured in the books. Nouns suggest images to the child. Nouns are more easily learned. So if the child has learned only half the words he is supposed to have learned it will be chiefly nouns that he knows.

Second, the important words are the "service words," those which tie nouns together. These words are verbs and prepositions and conjunctions. They are adverbs and adjectives that are used with all verbs. They are pronouns that are used for all nouns. They are, in short, "the little words" that seem so hard for poor readers to learn. They are "were" and "very" and "there," and "from" and "my" and so on.

The teacher can look back over the word lists of the basic series and see which service words have been used. There are only about 220 of them, as has been found by research. The writer will send this list of 220 to anyone on request. It is called the Basic Sight vocabulary, which makes up two-thirds of all primary reading books. The child who enters third grade

knowing only half his word ladder will be found to know many of these basic service words. A check with the list will tell which ones he needs to learn. Then in various ways he can learn the others of these important words. As soon as he knows them by sight, he will be able to read with them alone two-thirds of all third grade reading books. With the help of the nouns he knows, he will be able to do ordinary third grade reading.

This plan of teaching the important words has been shown by experience in many hundreds of schools to be a practical one. The child who is behind can be taught the important words by other children through word games. Knowing these connecting service words, the child can, with a little knowledge of nouns, guess the remaining nouns. On a solid sight foundation, sounding and other attacks can be built. But a foundation of sight vocabulary is the first essential. The word ladder system is the recognized one in American schools. And the service words form a word ladder that is easily learned and is of immediate and unusual use. As stated above, the writer will send a list of these words on request, so that the teacher can pick them out from the word lists in her readers.

A Group Approach to Remedial Reading

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AND

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Remedial reading has become a highly specialized area of education. In most instances of reading retardation the child's disability is diagnosed and a program,

oriented to one or more of the accepted

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remedial techniques, is prescribed for the child. Many such techniques are primarily individual and are at times pursued in a manner which is somewhat at variance with modern educational thought. The tendency toward disassociation of remedial instruction from group activities led the authors to seek answers to the following questions during the summer of 1951.

1. Does a permissive group environment affect the reading achievement of pupils who have had previous, relatively unsuccessful, individual remedial instruction?
2. Will a social studies program aimed at meeting the needs for expression of emotions and ideas, facilitate the growth of children who are receiving group remedial instruction?

To investigate the above questions, the authors conducted a six-week summer reading clinic at Chestnut Hill Academy, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, from July 9 to August 17, 1951.

The Group

The group consisted of eleven boys ranging in age from eight years and six months to thirteen years and eleven months, in grades three to eight, who had been referred to a reading specialist or to a reading clinic because of reading retardation. Their I. Q.'s ranged from 98 to 124. They were all considered educational problems by their respective public and private schools located in Philadelphia and its suburbs. Following diagnosis by one of several reading clinics the boys were referred to the authors for remediation.

The New California Short-Form Test of Mental Maturity, (Elementary '47 S-Form), and the Gates Reading Survey for Grades 3 to 10, (Form II), were administered to each boy on the first day of the

session. The Gates Reading Survey for Grades 3 to 10, (Form I), was administered to each boy on the last day of the session. (For results, see Table I.)

Staff

There were three teachers with the boys throughout the day. The director was an elementary school administrator who had taught in the elementary school and was certified as a psychological examiner. One of the staff members was a fourth grade teacher, whose experience was primarily with boys. The other teacher, the only female member of the staff, was experienced in teaching both first and second grades.

Rationale of the Program

Through their experience the authors found that children who receive individual remedial instruction must face, at least in part, the following problems: Groups exert pressure upon retarded readers. These pressures are in most instances exerted without the group or the teacher being conscious of them. In most instances the retarded reader pressurizes himself by comparing his reading proficiency with that of his classmates. Emotional pressures, whether group or self-inflicted, tend to make the retarded reader insecure. In addition to the inability to read at the group norm, retarded readers who leave the classroom for individual instruction feel that they are different, and also, that they are missing classroom activities in which they would like to be involved. This lack of participation adds to their feeling of inferiority. Coupled with these feelings are teacher reactions to their inability to read. In such an emotional environment the child tends to protect his

ego by attention-seeking behavior or by withdrawal. Either type of behavior tends to disassociate the child from the core of the group. The authors feel that in such an emotional climate a child soon loses contact with the group and soon loses his ability to deal with the group. They feel that in extreme cases a reorientation to group behavior and to group dynamics, under circumstances conducive to success and security, is a prerequisite to total resolution of the reading problem.

In order to minimize the above mentioned problems, the authors attempted to set up an emotional climate different from that of a classroom. The program was aimed at eliminating pressures. The boys as a group were poor readers and worked as individuals only if they chose to do so. Their teachers constantly praised their reading ability. The program was permissive so that much social experimentation could be initiated by the boys.

In addition to the new emotional climate, the authors felt that a segment of the day should be cathartic. They decided to include a social studies hour. It was to be composed only of actual experiences, and discussion because these were the areas in which the boys were most secure and proficient. The prime objective of the social studies program was self-expression of any sort on the part of the boys.

The Activity Room

The activity room was a large library. There were five study alcoves on one side of the room. The center space contained the discussion table, at the head of which was a blackboard. Also situated in this area were two other tables upon which were placed books of varying levels of dif-

ficulty. One table contained books at the first and second grade levels and the other contained books at the third and fourth grade levels. The books on the library shelves ranged from a fourth grade level of difficulty through high school. There were approximately two thousand books in the room. Scattered around the central area were large comfortable chairs and several working tables. Also placed in the central area was the librarian's desk which served as the supply center. Each alcove contained a round table and a number of chairs. Placed at strategic points throughout the room were the following:

1. Pencils
2. Paper of all sizes
3. A small Metronoscope with rolls ranging in difficulty from grade one through junior high school
4. A Telebinocular with 50 slides for visual exercises and tests
5. A number of performance tests
6. A stop clock
7. A portable tape recorder
8. A typewriter
9. Approximately 50 word and phrase flash cards
10. Approximately 200 large pictures with descriptions attached
11. Magazines of interest to boys
12. A tracing table with crayons, paper and filing envelopes for words learned

The Program

The group met from 8:30 to 3:30 five days a week. The daily schedule decided upon by the authors prior to the beginning of the session was:

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 8:30 | Story writing |
| 9:00 | Cooperative formulation of daily plans |
| 9:15 | Social studies discussion |
| 10:00 | Activity period |
| 11:30 | Swimming |
| 1:00 | Lunch |
| 1:45 | Activity period |
| 3:00 | Sports period |
| 3:30 | Dismissal |

The boys were allowed to move about freely or to sit wherever they chose. There were no restrictions relative to talking. At all times they were free to use any of the equipment.

Story writing

Each day upon arrival, the boys were required to take papers and pencils from the common supply to write a story of whatever length and on whatever subject they chose. The teachers helped with words only if asked to do so, by the boys. Stories were turned in to the teachers when they were considered complete by the students. They were not corrected, discussed, or returned to the boys. Some of them were published in two mimeographed newspapers which were issued during the session. The spelling was corrected in the stories used in the newspaper. This activity was the only one which the boys were required to complete daily.

Daily Plans

Plans were made daily by the boys. The boys enumerated the activities to be done. No time limits were set nor were the boys required to complete or to attempt all of the activities. Below are listed activities which were included in the plans.

1. Metronoscope practice
2. Flash card drill
3. Oral reading to a number of boys and/or teachers
4. Silent reading in an "easy" book
5. Group work on word analysis
6. Silent reading in a "hard" book
7. Tracing troublesome words, individually and with a group
8. Individual recording of oral reading
9. Writing of as many words as one can spell
10. Visual exercises on the Telebinocular
11. Looking at pictures
12. Free story writing
13. Free time

These activities were described to the boys on the first day of the session. The typical daily list suggested by the boys usually contained six or seven of the above items. Because the stigma of reading primers and first grade books was removed by the instructors, and because many of the boys could only read comfortably at this level, the reading of the "easy" books was the most attractive activity. Grade level connotations were never used by either boys or teachers; the descriptive terms were "easy" and "hard."

Discussion Period

The central theme of the discussion periods was, "People, How and Why They Act as They Do." The period usually began with a question about people. The discussion periods were non-directed and the boys were allowed to discuss anything from their own points of view. The items discussed most frequently were the "horror of school" and "wickedness of teachers." Not one boy said that he liked school and each of the boys attempted to picture his school as the worst and his teacher as the least understanding. As the session progressed the discussion periods became longer and the staff members were less involved. As the teachers became less involved, the subjects discussed were narrowed down to reading and the injustice of its importance to school success, and the group feeling about school problems. Although many other areas of interest were discussed, the discussions constantly reflected the boys' preoccupation with school and its problems.

Activity Period

The activity periods were the work periods of the day. The boys were allowed

to pursue any activities which they chose and with whomever they chose. As the session progressed there was great rivalry to complete as many activities as possible. Boys went on spurts of working at some activity. There were periods of time when some boys decided to have only free time. There was no discernible pattern of choice. As the session progressed the boys balanced their activities rather well. The only activity which seemed slightly more popular than the others, was the reading of "easy" books.

Swimming

The boys went swimming daily with a teacher in a public pool. They always swam as a group. During the early part of the session they tended to "pick on" the younger members of the group, throwing them into the pool, etc. During this period the group also attempted to throw the teacher into the pool. As the session progressed they began to swim cooperatively. In the last three weeks of the session there was only one instance of the group "picking on" one boy. During this time much effort was expended by the boys to make the teacher feel that he was an accepted member of the group.

Lunch

The boys ate at two lunch tables with a teacher seated at the head of each table. Food was served by the teachers. There was much discussion on the part of the boys about table manners and much further critical discussion of the schools which the boys attended. Here again the boys vied with each other to portray their own school as the "worst" and their own teacher as the "worst." The teachers did not comment. They did, however, ask

questions which tended to give boys opportunities to express their feelings on many subjects.

Sports Period

The boys were not required to enter the sports activities. They were allowed to sit in the shade and observe the sports activities if they chose to do so. During the third week the boys decided that baseball was no longer interesting. They organized a two-team game of hide and seek. This game lasted for two weeks. At that time the group decided to return to baseball. Upon the resumption of baseball the group insisted that all boys play.

Homework

It was suggested that each boy read every evening. This reading was not checked. The boys chose the materials which they would read during the evening. Through questioning the parents it was found that after the first week of the session all of the boys except "I" were reading at home each evening. "I" did not read at home during the entire session. (For "I" scores see Table I.)

General Observations

The early days of the session were characterized by much aggressive behavior. There was, at the outset, much fighting, ruining of materials, teasing, etc. This behavior gradually changed to such activities as taking charge of materials and taking charge of the cleanliness of the room. By the third week the boys had allocated special tasks to themselves. They would not tolerate infringement upon their area of responsibility. On occasion if a boy became tired of his particular maintenance task, he bargained with another boy for an exchange of tasks. Three boys,

upon arrival, were obviously withdrawn. During the second week the group decided, in a discussion period, to make one of these boys laugh whenever they were near him because he had not laughed for a whole week. No boy exhibited behavior which would be considered social withdrawal at the end of the six week session. One boy remained antagonistic to the group until the last week of the session. He exhibited his antagonism constantly by teasing. There was never an instance of teasing about reading proficiency. This one area seemed inviolate. Most other behaviors were teased, at one time or another. Only one boy cried during the six weeks. He cried twice because the boys "picked on" him. The boys superstitiously crossed their fingers when they chose to record their oral reading. The boys' topic of discussion when teachers were not present was related to the permissive air of the teachers. Boys began keeping lists of books which they had read. (These were primarily of first and second grade difficulty.) Ten of the boys decided to keep a file of words learned. These files were relatively disorganized but were used for flash card drills, by the boys. As each week passed, the boys seemed better able to express themselves to the teachers. They also seemed to be calmer and they walked around the room less. During the early weeks of the session boys spent the activity periods as far away from the teachers as possible. As the session progressed the boys tended to choose to sit at the tables at which a teacher was seated. Communication between boys and between boys and teachers increased constantly throughout the session. All the parents of the boys felt that they were showing marked

growth. On the last day of the session the group was still unanimous in its dislike for school. Three months later, at a picnic on a Saturday morning during the school year, all of the boys except one stated that they now enjoyed school. The one boy, (D on the Table), was more vehement than ever that he disliked the new school to which he had transferred that September.

Results

The median reading gain made by the group during the six week session was 1.0 academic year. (see Table I).

The mean reading gain made by the group during the six week session was 1.2 academic year. (see Table I).

Boys with reading problems with the etiology diagnosed as "immature" showed the least growth. (see D, G, H, and J in Table I).

The attitudes of the boys toward reading was, as observed by the teachers, much improved at the end of the six weeks.

It was the feeling of the staff that the six-week session was productive of much social and emotional adjustment on the part of the boys, in addition to relatively excellent reading growth.

Summary

The boys did not tend to choose remedial activities in any pattern. Their choice of activities was in no way related to their specific reading disabilities. The boys, as a group, showed much reading growth as a result of permissive group-remediation. Many of them showed more growth than they had in individual remedial situations. The attitudes of the boys toward reading appeared to the staff to be much improved, as did their general social and emotional adjustment.

TABLE I

Students	C. A.	I. Q.	Grade in Sept., '52	Previous Remedial Instruction	Reading Score Prior to Course*	Reading Score After Course**	Gain	Diagnosis
A	13-11	98	8	yes	3.6	4.6	1.0	Associative learning disability
B	13-2	103	9	yes	7.1	8.3	1.2	Associative learning disability
C	12-9	124	8	no	7.6	8.6	1.0	Poor work habits; School changes
D	12-0	117	7	no	4.7	5.5	.8	Poor work habits; Immature
E	11-9	116	6	yes	3.9	5.0	1.1	Emotional problems
F	11-9	104	5	yes	0.0	3.0	3.0	Associative learning disability
G	11-2	102	5	yes	3.2	3.5	.3	Visual anomaly; Immature
H	10-10	99	6	yes	4.4	5.0	.6	Emotional problems; Immature
I	9-9	108	4	yes	2.5	3.8	1.3	Absence from school
J	9-3	114	5	yes	3.6	3.7	.1	Immature
K	8-6	107	3	yes	0.0	3.1	3.1	Associative learning disability
Range 98-124					Median 3.6	Median 4.6	Median Gain 1.0	
							Median Gain 1.2	

* Gates Reading Survey for Grades 3 to 10 (Vocabulary, Comprehension, Speed, and Accuracy) Form II.

** Gates Reading Survey for Grades 3 to 10 (Vocabulary, Comprehension, Speed, and Accuracy) Form I.

The authors feel that this study points up the need for further investigation of the values of group remedial instruction as it is related to personality adjustment and to the etiology of disability. Another area

of potential investigation is the effect of both the emotional climate and the role and status of the individual in his particular social group upon the efficiency of remedial reading instruction.

WRITING AS THERAPY

(Continued from Page 138)

ing jobs. His findings had to be accurate because his associates in the group were depending upon him. His was a responsibility such as adults take on in making reports to business, club, or professional groups. Alan's pride in his work carried him on, despite many obstacles, into a highly readable, illustrated second draft, filling three pages of handwriting. His feeling about the importance of preventing forest fires is indicated by the childlike but clear sentence: "If the forests in the United States should go to waste we would be in a pretty tough spot. Fire, insects, and fungi are all fighting against us. Take fire, for instance." Alan did take fire, gave facts and figures as to its damage, quoted his sources, pointed out preventive measures.

The equilibrium of needs and responses which writing can assist in a sympathetic, friendly classroom seems to stem from the nature of language itself in the spontaneous activities of child life. Overstreet, in *The Mature Mind*, reminds us of

the relationship between speech and human response:

From the words of a mother to her child to the words of one diplomat to another, speech is a maker of psychological universes. Speech, again, is that through which we most commonly seek to escape our skin-enclosed isolation and to enter into a community of experience."⁴

To be an effective person, to be a part of the stream of human affairs, to be more adequately related to one's fellows, to clarify what one knows and thinks, to be respected and loved by others are prime values for both child and adult. Teaching which fosters these values makes use of the humanizing dimensions of language and, consciously or not, applies the therapy intrinsic in the written word. Thus taught, writing is more than an art form or a service tool. Writing can help to bring a child into a better relationship with his fellows and to a happier belief in himself.

⁴Overstreet, H. A. *The Mature Mind*, p. 57. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1949.

Wednesdays at Two -- An Hour Spent with a Poetry Club

MARY MARGARET CURRY*

Teachers everywhere are constantly seeking to vitalize their instruction so that learning may be a joyous experience. A school *can* be "a pleasant place in which to make mistakes." One of the channels, happily, through which just such teaching can be achieved, is that of poetry.

Although it is customary to defer the introduction of the clubs into the school program until the junior high school level has been reached, the Poetry Club which this paper will describe is an elementary school program. The Martha Washington Elementary School, a school composed of more than a thousand girls and boys (enrolment 1,022, June, 1951), has organized a plan whereby all fifth and sixth grade pupils can select and enjoy a weekly club period.

These pupils, in the main, are in an underprivileged neighborhood: there is no public library nearby, nor is there a recreation center. Therefore, reasons their principal, they must be exposed to as many different experiences as possible to enrich their day-to-day living. Every Wednesday at 2 o'clock, the tramping of feet is heard in the hall as the club members move to their various club-rooms.

Last year the sponsor of the Poetry Club had hoped to enjoy an hour of poetry along with the group. It would have been a welcome interval, also, in a weekly program of teaching "slow learners" to read. Because of the limited size of the assigned

room, only fifteen could meet and work in comfort. Two boys were members of a remedial class; the remaining ones were sixth-grade pupils, three of whom were given no choice of clubs (due to absence when choices were made or because other clubs were filled.) All of these boys and girls were already familiar with poetry, since poetry is a definite part of the school's curriculum.

Unfortunately, the organization of clubs was later than usual. Eight weeks or more could not produce world-shaking results, yet from such small beginnings have emerged values for both pupils and sponsor.

As a beginning, nursery rhymes were read. "Wit, humor, dramatic climax, the sense of wonder combined with everyday common sense, are all here;—the music of the jingles, their fine rhythm and varied rhyme scheme train the ear at the same time that they satisfy it. Adults rereading these rhymes which are the common possession of English-speaking people, will be astounded at the wide range of topics covered and the varied gaily colored scenes which Mother Goose provides."¹

It was surprising that only a few of these rhymes seemed familiar to the group. Yet, when the sponsor recalled the back-

*Currently teaching in the Emlen School, Philadelphia.

¹Eaton, Anne Thaxter. *Reading With Children*, p. 43. New York: Viking Press, 1940.

ground of the children, it was understandable. A plan was worked out, therefore, to help them become familiar with some of the classic jingles. At roll-call, Geraldine, chosen by the group as secretary, suggested that each member answer to his name with a rhyme. In the following two meetings a first line, then a middle line was quoted and the suggested rhyme had to be recognized and quoted entirely.

The sponsor tried to see that the full meaning of the thought and emotion of each poem was indicated in its reading. The power or delicacy, vivacity or tranquility, the gaiety or solemnity demanded by the poem must be expressed. Such factors as voice control, sustained and directed breathing, exactness and nicety of enunciation are all requisite to an effective presentation so that children will enjoy and understand fine poetry.

At one meeting, a diversion in the form of choral speaking was introduced. The sheer delight of the children joining in with the group in expressing aloud the moods, rhythm, and ideas, rewarded the sponsor. Poems were selected from "Let's Read Together Poems"²

"Childhood Mystery and Experience" - pp. 32, 35, 36, 37, 47, 48, 51, 54, 56, 59.

"Living Things" - pp. 62, 65, 82.

"Nature and Seasons" - pp. 103, 116, 117, 120

"People" - pp. 126, 129.

This choral-speaking hour gave the girls and boys an opportunity to learn how to bring poetry into our work-a-day world

²Helen A. Brown, and Harry J. Hettman, *Let's Read Together Poems* (An Anthology of Verse for Choral Reading). Evanston, Ill.; Row, Peterson & Co., 1949.

by means of their voices. Although a verse-speaking group has been functioning within the school and in the community for several years, this was the first time the Poetry Club had had the experience. One of the group suggested that a choral-speaking evening at home could be planned, in which they could share some of their favorite poems. A primary aim throughout the series of meetings was to maintain an informal atmosphere. The copying of poems was not required (copying and re-copying was given as one reason for disliking poems), although children who wanted to could do so. No memorization was required, but many poems were learned through constant repetition. Poetry time is fun time. The sponsor thought that her objectives could best be attained through sixty minutes of companionship and an exchange of favorite poems.

Sometimes a familiar poem was brought in apologetically, with a comment, "maybe you never heard of this one." Remembering Anne Eaton's words, the leader accepted the poem in sincerity. "If the older reader is wise and sensitive, he does not emphasize the poem's familiarity, but reading it over, finds in it something of the freshness and joy of the child's discovery."³

After a strenuous day ending with a hectographing stint, the sponsor met with the Club without stopping to wash her purple-stained fingertips. When someone exclaimed about the color, Gelett Burgess came to the rescue and his *Purple Cow* was quoted immediately. After two repetitions, with smiles and chuckles the stage was conveniently set for our Nonsense Verse.

³Eaton, *op cit.*, pp. 119-134.

The following were enjoyed:⁴

Washing—John Drinkwater
Presents—Marchette Gaylord Chute
Troubles—Dorothy Aldis
Skipping Ropes—Dorothy Aldis
To China—Leroy F. Jackson
A Circus Garland—Rachel Field
Mr. Nobody—Author Unknown
The Owl and the Pussy-Cat—Edward Lear
The Duel—Eugene Field
The Clothesline—Charles Cole
The Complaint of the Camel—Charles Edward Carryl

At the close of the hour someone asked, "Can't we have more next week?" meaning more of these captivating, funny, laugh-provoking poems such as Edward Lear's. These poems lie within the framework of the children's experiences so it was natural that they enjoyed them.

Marjorie Barrows' edition⁵ proved a popular source for the next hour:

Jonathan Bing—Beatrice Curtis Brown
More About Jonathan Bing—Beatrice Curtis Brown
The Circus—Elizabeth Madox Roberts
The Animal Store—Rachel Field
I'm Hiding—Dorothy Aldis
The Picnic—Dorothy Aldis
Choosing Shoes—Freida Wolfe

In addition to the nonsense poems, fairy poems from the same source were included; *A Fairy Went a-Marketing and Finding Fairies*, as well as *The Elf Man* and *Rainbow Fairies*. These however, did not have the anticipated appeal.

⁴These poems can be found in Marjorie Barrows' *Two Hundred Best Poems*, New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1930, 1938; also in Miriam B. Huber's *Story and Verses for Children*, New York: The Macmillan Co., 1940.

⁵Barrows, *op. cit.*

⁶National Society for the Study of Education, Forty-Eighth Year Book, Part II, *Reading in the Elementary School*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949.

⁷Barrows, *op. cit.*

"Poetry is for delight, a mode of pleasure, nothing to be known but lived."⁶ The club's sponsor knew that children must experiment, trying first this response, then that one, finding added insight all the while. Therefore it was quite logical to move on to other poetic fields. Finding poems suitable to the child was not an easy task. Perseverance would surely reap its own reward; sooner or later appealing poems must be found; no child should go away disliking poetry.

An hour was spent in experimenting with dialect poems, for the novelty and hoped-for appreciation. Riley's *Orphant Annie* and *The Hired Man*; Eugene Field's *Seein' Things at Night* and Dunbar's *In the Morning*, *Little Brown Baby*, and *When Malindy Sings* were the favorites. Some teachers question the reason for including them and scorn their use on any occasion, claiming that children must always hear the best English. The poems were enjoyed nevertheless and were included among the request numbers. Poetry time is fun time and fun was on the agenda.

Making up a cheer song for the track teams, who were practicing for their Meet, provided motivation for further experimentation. After much revision, the group was satisfied with their song, which made up in gusto for the somewhat limping lines. It is plain to see that children *do* want sound and rhythm. Hence, Charles Cole's *Clothesline*⁷ with its "Flip! Flap!" was well received.

Nature and animal poems were prime favorites. Poems about the sea, flowers, birds, and bees were popular choices, also. For these, Marjorie Barrow's collection⁸

was an invaluable source of inspiration and enjoyment.

Among the miscellaneous pieces, Tennyson's *Bugle Song* gave ample opportunity to appreciate music in verse. Freida Wolfe's *Choosing Shoes* was hailed with delight and strangely enough, with two successive groups, Robert Frost's *Snowy Evening* became a request number (to the delight of their sponsor). While the meaning of Masfield's *Sea Fever* was not crystal clear, the rhythm was appealing; over and over, "I must go down to the seas again," was heard.

Observation helped to make possible some constructive evaluations, which should help the same sponsor or another, to provide opportunities for maximum enjoyment and appreciation in successive groups.

Voluntary membership is preferable and an interest in poetry the only requirement. Sustained interest is more likely to follow if the members come into the Club of their own accord. Yet in the group which is here described two boys who preferred track activities and were "just sent in," stayed to participate and enjoy the varied list of poems. Alfonso fell in love with Dunbar's poems and was ready to quote on any occasion from *In the Morning* and from *Little Brown Baby*. In his particularly suitable, crooning voice he would urge, "Little Brown Baby, wif spa'klin eyes, Come to yo pappy an' set on his knee."

Henry, the other "sent in" member, refused to be interested in any poems but those of the sea and ships. Amy Lowell's *Sea Shell*, deLa Mare's *Ship of Rio* and

*Barrows, *op. cit.*

Masfield's *Sea Fever* were all "his" poems. Henry and Alfonso, however, are happy exceptions to the rule that membership should be voluntary.

The sponsor must see the fun in poems and develop his own flights of imagination. That fun and fancy is transferred to the children. "The Spider and the Fly," e. g., has been used to advantage. When the hall door was opened with a bang, the sponsor stood just inside the door and in what was intended as a seductive voice, arm out-stretched, began the familiar invitation to be dined upon. As the group filed in they murmured, "Will you walk into my parlor?" said the spider to the fly," and the noise subsided. Some smiled, others giggled self-consciously, but every one of the group attempted to mingle his voice with the others and all sounded as one. So, taking advantage of this mood, Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore and Topsy-Turvy Land were repeated in unison and the stage was set for the afternoon's enjoyment. Children will love their leader for the fun that is in him. Begin with sheer fun; the more serious poems can be considered later. So have fun, by all means.

"The leader," Dora Smith suggests, "must have a wealth of poetry in head and heart."⁹ Hence another important "must," to stimulate a group such as the one under discussion: *Be prepared with a long and varied list of poems for all occasions.* If, however, no appropriate one is at hand, a group will delight in creating one if they have already become acquainted with poetry.

⁹Smith, Dora, in National Society for the Study of Education, Forty-Eighth Year Book, *op. cit.*

Do not underrate the children's ability.

The children's love of Robert Frost's *Snowy Evening*¹⁰ somewhat justifies this statement. This poem, as mentioned earlier, was on the request list and "I have promises to keep and miles to go before I sleep," was often quoted, appropriately, to fit various situations.

The interest, the degree of enthusiasm for certain poems, the apathy expressed toward others and the constant request for particular ones, lead to these observations: nature poems and fun poems were most popular; imaginative poems, followed by poems of names, e. g., *Jonathan Bing*, were next. Poems of feeling too must be included. Story poems and ethical ones were unpopular. As a procedure, *Mother Goose Rhymes* followed by Lear's nonsense verses, then Milne and Stevenson, and some of Longfellow, will help children to free themselves and to enjoy the rhythm and the rhyme.

Although a child's interest is a "magic talisman," yet guidance is needed toward the appreciation of good poetry. Hence in the list this writer included poems of Noyes, Browning, Tennyson and Frost, introducing the children to that field that stretches on and on. If poetry is read properly and discussed with them, the children's attitudes, tastes and use of lan-

guage are influenced.

The Wednesday hour seemed all too short, yet if nothing else was accomplished, ample opportunity was given to consider the rich beauty to be found in many poems. Perhaps each child has made a poem his own; perhaps his spirit has been lifted, with something to grow on.

The sponsor of the group hopes that, despite all handicaps, a spark of appreciation for poetry has been kindled. Perhaps the tiny spark will someday become a glowing coal. "Poetry is like the air itself. Its appeal can never be regimented; it must remain forever, as it has always been, a matter into which individual choice and individual feeling enter. Each reader must find a poem that because of its thought and form speaks clear and straight to him and so becomes his personal possession. This in itself lays a grave responsibility upon poetry-loving adults. For poetry must . . . be put in the way of boys and girls, both the readers and non-readers, so that each may have the opportunity to find a poem that belongs to him."¹¹ If this has been the result of "Wednesday at Two," even to a small degree, the sponsor has not "sponsored" in vain; but there are still more "promises to keep" and "miles to go" (with future groups) if one would sleep.

¹⁰Huber, *op. cit.*

¹¹Eaton, *op. cit.* p. 132.

Verb Forms Can Be Taught

JOHN H. TREANOR¹

The correct use of irregular verb forms troubles pupils at all levels. They are exercised on "I have seen" or "He did it" in the primary grades and are still at it in high school. They are not helped very much by a study of grammar nor by the verb exercises scattered throughout present-day language books.

Is there any solution? A little reflection shows that speech habits—and here the emphasis is on verb forms—are either good or bad, depending almost entirely on the quality of speech to which a pupil has been exposed. While the school and the interested home make every effort to inculcate correct language habits, the results are not too encouraging. The school fails because of the necessity for dwelling upon other phases of English and the home is unable to compete successfully with the vulgarisms of comics, movies, radio, and television.

Slovenly speech, careless and inaccurate, is the mark of an uneducated person. Hence, if the schools in language habits are to appear successful they must make a more than casual attack upon the problem. Very little can be expected in a carry-over from formal grammar. The smattering of drill material in text-books is completely inadequate. But the problem of incorrect speech is too serious to overlook and a strong continued attack seems to be inescapably needed.

Probably the only solution lies in daily practise on troublesome forms, the correct usage being unmistakably understood and

being reviewed so often and so thoroughly as to make good speech simply automatic. The following observations, relating only to the more common irregular verb forms, may suggest an approach and a solution.

The most commonly used tenses are the present, the past, and the present perfect—I see, I saw, I have seen—and it is here that most errors of speech occur. With these tenses high-lighted for intensive work, the teacher plans for a daily five-minute oral drill, automatic, unvaried, and thoroughly clear.

The following frame-work is useful:

To-day I go to school.

Yesterday I went to school.

Twice I have gone to school.

Here is a simple pattern embracing the three tenses under consideration and capable of any flexibility that the imagination of the teacher may suggest. The framework requires only to be presented; for its simplicity scarcely taxes even the very young. Then, after a few days or a week at the most, the pupils understand exactly what is required.

Here is the class situation. The teacher says, "Today I *go* to school," or "To-day I *bring* my lunch," inserting whatever verb she wishes to use. The pupils one after another repeat the formula, not in any haste whatsoever, but in clear-cut decisive accents. The boys and girls may respond row by row or at the teacher's pleasure or in any other way that will provide the

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greatest number of responses with the slightest of interruptions.

Certain cautions are suggested by actual experience: because of a single error, the pupil must begin again; there is to be no hurry; "yesterday" (or "Saturday" or any similar word) must be clearly enunciated; the word "have" in the third line must be unmistakably a part of the verb. The teacher, too, while using a row-by-row method of response, must call scattered individuals or dwell more frequently upon pupils whose speech is most troublesome.

The efficacy of the drill, however, lies in its daily use. To-day, to-morrow, and next week—endless repetitions of correct usage in a situation that is alive and purposeful. Within a short while, almost no errors will be heard during the five-minute lesson, and it is not too much to say that sooner or later errors will cease to be heard outside the classroom, as at recess, at lunch time, or at other informal periods. Where this device has been begun in the third or fourth grade and pursued continuously in succeeding years—using only five minutes a day—the results are almost completely satisfactory. Indeed it is a not uncommon observation among boys and girls that where they detect a mis-use of one of these common verb forms they ascribe it not to ignorance on the part of a class-mate but to his stupid desire to "show off." Teachers of grades seven and eight, after their pupils have been thus exposed to correct usage, affirm that almost never do they hear blunders in verb forms—even in situations not part of formal class-room work.

The objection that a five-minute daily drill of this type can become monotonous and barren can be met by the teachers'

enthusiasm and ingenuity. Variations are endless. Besides modifications in the thought of the pattern, verbs may be combined:

To-day I sit on the ground and I find a penny.

Yesterday I sat on the ground and I found a penny.

Twice I have sat on the ground and I have found a penny.

In this variation the second "have" must be included.

Other variations embrace the pronoun:

To-day *he* goes, etc.

or to counteract "me and him":

To-day he and I

To-day Carol and I

To-day he and she, etc.

Again—in upper grades—other tenses of the verb are used, as well as the subjunctive mood and the passive voice. With all these, however, the main purpose of the drill must not be forgotten—to provide not lessons in grammar nor in vocabulary but daily intensive repetitions of correct forms.

The following irregular verbs, not necessarily in the order given, were found to suffice for a year's work in grade four, the initial year for this work:

do	run	break	drink
go	some	get	give
see	speak	write	eat
say	sing	catch	sit
bring	find	begin	fall

In grade five, to the original twenty, ten new verbs were added:

lie	lay	burst	build	sleep
freeze	let	choose	leave	beat

And in grade six, ten more:

forget	stand	creep	put	buy
find	burn	hurt	bite	grow

Some such plan, then, has been proved useful in meeting one part of the problem of correct usage. The device is simplicity itself and it involves only a few minutes

each day. Whether in a crowded English program other errors might similarly be challenged is a matter for further investigation. For the three tenses of these irregular verbs, however, the problem seems not unlikely to have been solved.

We Learn from Television

ROSE M. SENA¹

No one who has been teaching these past few years can minimize the growing interest of children in television. It may be the teacher's prerogative to dismiss television as a time-consuming entertainment and make little comment except to demand that homework and reading time be kept apart and not sacrificed for this new attraction. However, it would appear that the teacher's responsibility (only one more added to the numerous others) should be to encourage intelligent use of television and to help extend the knowledge gained through this new medium by use of books, hobbies, reading, etc.

A survey taken with my own fourth graders revealed that children spend as much as four hours a day watching programs that are mostly for adult entertainment. With a little encouragement they can be motivated to watch the more educational programs that have found their way to the television screen in the last year, but have not been brought to their attention.

This attention to TV in the classroom need not be time consuming, since the school day is already too short for the various and sundry responsibilities we al-

ready have. It can be done during the discussion or current events period or in a short unit. Of course this extending of television into the classroom does mean that the teacher should be familiar with the various programs, but within a short time one can become acquainted with the routines and objectives of the children's programs.

The primary objective in emphasizing television in the classroom should be to develop more discriminate use of television time for programs that are educational or at least written with the child in mind. Children should not spend all of their television time on adult programs and "slapstick" comedy. Of course, since they are individuals in a family pattern they will naturally see and enjoy the comedians, variety shows, and family life programs with the rest of the family. However, few children know of the good programs that they can see without interfering with the family schedule. It becomes a habit to watch the same programs and rarely do they change channels in search of new interests.

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Together my class and I reviewed various programs with the question in mind — Can we learn something worthwhile from these programs? Some of the programs we discussed and questioned were: U. N. Stamp Club, Mr. Wizard, The Nature of Things, Children's Theater, You Are An Artist, Zoo Parade, Magic Slate, Gabby Hayes, Mr. I Magination, Magic Cottage, Quiz Kids, Captain Video, Small Fry Club, Tom Corbett-Space Cadet, Watch the World, and newsreels.² Don Herbert of the Mr. Wizard Show and Dr. Roy K. Marshall of The Nature of Things do an expert job in presenting scientific principles in a very elementary fashion. Experiments on air were simply explained by Mr. Herbert so that children could reproduce them. Dr. Marshall's explanation of the eclipse of the sun prepared my class for the eclipse in March. Zoo Parade gives many facts about birds and animals and proved interesting to children of this age since they are usually fond of nature. Captain Video and Space Cadets supply plenty of adventure and lead imaginative youngsters to think about the importance of the universe. Many programs present films about other countries and their customs, industries, and natural resources. News commentators help to make children more conscious of maps, newspapers, and world events. The Gabby Hayes Show and Mr. I Magination introduce many historical persons or present the stories of famous holidays. Magic Slate presents scenes from classics and fairy tales that children should be acquainted with. The U. N. Stamp Club not only in-

troduces the stamp collecting hobby but also gives information about people of the world.

The secondary objective in utilizing television should be to extend the knowledge gained from these programs by further reading, use of encyclopedias, starting hobbies, reading of classics and newspapers, and demonstrating scientific principles. As a result of these programs, many in our class were encouraged to read *Alice in Wonderland*, *Pinocchio*, *Robin Hood*, and *Tom Sawyer*. Others sought more information and reported to the class about Daniel Boone, Abe Lincoln, George Washington, Thomas Edison, Buffalo Bill, Henry Ford, holidays, and places of interest. These correlated well with our study of history and geography. Science demonstrations about air, water, and magnets interested others and they were reproduced in the classroom. Current events were followed more carefully in the newspapers. The children were able to broaden their concept of time and space in relation to world activities. They followed the activities in Korea on the world map with more understanding. Some started stamp collections and could tell interesting stories about stamps. Numerous quiz programs patterned after the Quiz Kids were held in the classroom. Letters were written to their favorite programs telling why they enjoyed them. Television helped to improve the vocabulary of the class. Use of the dictionary was more in evidence. Occasional discussions of certain programs cleared up facts they didn't quite understand. Each one was eager to share information gained from television with his classmates and to remind each other of coming programs. These programs were

²The channel and time for these programs are available in the television schedule of local newspapers.

by no means made compulsory, but as the months went by we were able to see many of the shows that interested us.

It is encouraging to see the TV fare of the children change from a steady diet of cowboys or adult comedy to a well-rounded schedule that includes these programs that have so much to offer. It is inspiring to realize the concepts, facts, appreciations, and understandings that youngsters do derive from television—far more than we give them credit for! This

was especially evident during the recent Kefauver Investigation. Even fourth graders were able to discuss the alarming situation with intelligence. While working through this unit one will find that television can never replace the teacher, because youngsters do need help in assimilating and relating the concepts and facts they meet on the various programs. However, it is one more aid we can use in the classroom with a minimum of effort but to maximum advantage.

Needed Research in Speech

KENNETH SCOTT WOOD¹

Since speech is biological in origin, physiological in mechanism, and predominantly sociological in function, it can be studied from several different angles. From the point of view of its evolutionary development, speech is intimately related to the biological origin of man as a species. From the standpoint of its being produced by definite action of body parts, speech is physiological in function; and, as we learn from anthropology, the more primitive the language, the greater are the evidences of its anatomical components. Observing that the purpose of speech is communication, we see it as a powerful social force in man's survival and development. We see speech as a means of expressing motivations, desires, and needs. We see how it makes possible man's extension of his wishes, his knowledge, and his ideas to others.

In the world of education speech includes such activities as reading orally, acting in a play, broadcasting, public speaking, debating, conversing, participating in organized discussion, and conducting a meeting. Many other activities are also included. In recent years speech has evinced a growing interest in the

field of listening; and many speech textbooks include a considerable body of material on that subject.

Speech also includes the study and the treatment of persons with speech defects as well as related emotional problems; it includes phonetics, semantics, voice science, and has more recently allied itself very closely to the whole field of hearing on the basis that the ears are speech organs in a very real sense.

Taking the broad view, speech would encompass the entire range of the social, psychological, physical, and physiological study of communication.

In order to present specific questions and topics in the field of speech which need investigation and study, we shall divide the field into three areas which, as far as educational implications are concerned, are very closely related. Only the first two areas will be considered here.

- I. Studies in *speech education*: Problems in understanding and acquiring the various speech skills.

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- II. Studies in *speech pathology*: Problems in diagnosing and treating the various speech defects and disorders.
- III. Studies in *speech science*: Problems in the analysis of the speech processes and their relationship to other aspects of human behavior.

It is evident that such a division of the field of speech does not set up mutually exclusive areas but does establish three channels of study on the basis of the implications of three kinds of research.

Needed Research in Speech Education

The first task of an educational system is to make its pupils articulate. The problems of concept formation, personality development, social adjustment, and vocational achievement are tightly linked to the problem of learning to speak meaningfully, distinctly, responsibly, and effectively. If this is true, or even partially true, the most needed research in speech is that which can be applied educationally. We need research which will tell us something about developing and teaching speech skills in the primary, intermediate, and secondary school levels with better results than we are getting now.

1. It is commonly observed in high schools and universities that a very large number of students have advanced through eight or nine grades without having acquired distinct articulation. Their words are not spoken clearly because the sounds in the words are not distinctly produced. When we consider that the intelligibility as well as the artistic effectiveness of speech depends first of all upon the ability to control the distinctness of articulation, we can see the possible importance of teaching the child more about speech sounds. We can see the possible need of reinforcing periodically his auditory concepts of the phonetic elements in speech throughout his elementary schooling and beyond.

Perhaps we could afford to experiment in order to discover how the pupil's speech would turn out if he were given strong units in phonetic training at every grade level with the aim of heightening and focusing his attention on speech sounds in isolation and in sequence. Such a program, if instituted on an experimental basis and under the direction of thoroughly trained teachers, might produce revealing results. This suggestion of introducing a regular phonetic program into the curriculum is not to be confused with the phonics work that frequently accompanies the teaching of reading. The phonetic training we are suggesting as an experiment is not involved with written or printed symbols, but is involved with establishing auditory concepts of speech sounds, with studying their acoustic characteristics, and with learning the manner in which they are produced; and the aim of such an experiment would not be to see if it produced improvement in word recognition and reading, but to see if the pupil would not eventually speak more clearly and have better command of the several components of oral expression.

Coupled with this experimental attempt to ingrain better articulatory habits in children would be other areas of exploration such as how to capitalize on the child's natural love of words, rhymes, and rhythm; how to initiate and perpetuate his interest in the elements of speech; and how to develop within him an awareness of language and communication in contrast to his developing speech as an automatic social function.

It would be of significance, too, if we could find out by representative sampling methods how much elementary teachers know about phonetics and oral expression in general.

2. Thousands of schools have acquired recording machines of various types, and they are being used in a variety of ways. When they are used for speech training, we raise the question as to whether or not they are being used to the

greatest advantage. We need experimental evidence which will show whether or not recording devices will aid materially in helping to improve speech; and we need to investigate more thoroughly the methods by which they may be used for maximum results. One is led to feel that too often the major operating factor in the use of a recording device is its novelty.

What can be accomplished by having a person speak into a microphone and then having him listen to himself? Is a person able to listen to his own speech critically enough to thereby improve it? Should certain specific training precede the use of the recorder? Do certain aspects of speech yield more readily to change than others when a person studies his own voice recordings? What are some of the factors and conditions which should control the use of recording and listening procedures for the teaching of speech skills?

Assuming that the equipment is of high fidelity, are most people able to recognize their own speech from recordings when there are no context cues? In everyday speaking, the individual hears his own voice radiating through his head bones to his inner ear; and some of the frequencies of sound which determine his voice quality he does not hear as others do. Consequently, what he hears from a recording may be a surprise to him. What is the psychological effect on an individual who hears his own voice for the first time? Is his speech better or worse than he originally conceived it to be? What light could be thrown on the person's speech problems by having him select from sample recordings the kind of speech qualities he thinks he has? What personality factors would be revealed by his indicating his concepts of his own speech? What is the nature of the motivating effects of working with recording apparatus for speech improvement?

While we are on the subject of microphones and loud-speaker speech, some research could be done in regard to the effect that a central

sound system has on the school atmosphere. How do pupils feel about their principal whom they frequently hear over the classroom loud-speaker but seldom see? What is the effect on the pupil of this less personal form of delivering to him official information and directives about school affairs? Does such a communication system within a school have anything to do with emotional tensions of the teachers as well as the pupils? This last question may be particularly important in those cases where the sound system is equipped so that the central office may listen in to any classroom selected. At what grade levels and how effectively can sound systems be used with pupil operation and its attendant possibilities for incidental speech education?

3. More research needs to be conducted in reference to the effects of the classroom teacher's speech on the speaking habits of her pupils and on their attitudes toward school work in general. Do pre-primary and primary grade children with poor speech habits improve more rapidly under some teachers than under others when no directly applied speech training is given? What are the differences in the speech of those teachers in respect to rate, intensity, pitch, quality, distinctness of utterance, and the quantity of their verbal output? Are there other observable differences among teachers as to personality traits which may have a bearing on whether or not they improve their pupils' speech while conducting regular classroom work?

4. The literature on speech improvement is replete with statements to the effect that speech is a reflection of the personality, that it is a vocal-equivalent of the mental and physical states of the individual. When we consider speech as not only a means of communicating thought but also as a means of concealing thought, and when we think of a person's using both the content and the mode of his speaking to disguise his feelings, to what degree may we assume that a person reflects his real personality

through his speech? As far as this author knows, there is no experimental evidence substantiating the idea that speech is a correlate of the personality.

5. It has been said rhetorically that if one cannot tell it, he does not know it. What is the relationship between learning subject matter such as geography, history, and literature and having speech experiences in these areas? Would opportunities for oral expression in these subject fields under certain conditions provide a greater motivation and a greater achievement than would writing experience? To what extent and in what way can speaking experiences contribute to the pupil's acquiring command of fundamental processes? Would we, for example, get a higher achievement level in reading if pupils were encouraged from the start to do more talking about what they are learning to read instead of marking reading workbooks? It seems to this author that the whole field of speech activity as related to school achievement at all grade levels is one which could be fruitfully investigated further.

6. Some light could be thrown on the nature of the processes involved in extemporaneous public speaking, and in thought processes themselves if we were to examine some of the thousands of speech notes that speakers carry with them to the platform. The notes would have to be studied along with the recordings of the speeches given; and some method would have to be devised to let us know at what times the speaker looked at them. It is a fact that no two speakers prepare for themselves the same kind of notes; their forms will vary widely. It is also true that some of the notes we are allowed to see after the speech has been given make us wonder how they ever served the purpose at all. Perhaps a study of such notes would tell us something about thought organization and recall during the speaking act when we analyze the written verbal cues that speakers design to call to mind the mental concepts they wish to express.

7. Since the emotional life of the developing child seems to have some effect on various phases of his speech activity, it is suggested that some sort of semantic research should be done on the use of profanity, taboo expressions, and interjections among children of various ages. Speech exists not only for the purpose of modifying the behavior of others, but it functions as an outlet for the emotions of the individual. What do these expressions of taboo language really mean in terms of the child's attitudes toward authority, toward the opposite sex, and toward himself? Do the reactions of adults toward such language on the part of the child condition his speech development as a whole? Will a traumatic experience, or series of experiences, in respect to forbidden words or phrases have a carry-over effect to other words with similar syllables?

More research needs to be done to understand the mechanisms behind a child's saying one thing and meaning another. In the classroom we sometimes see the child in a situation wanting to do a certain thing but saying that he does not want to, or he may say that he dislikes the teacher or his playmate, when in reality he feels just the opposite. Many studies have been made of the ways in which children project their feelings, desires, and motivations, but it is suggested that more research is needed in this area in which the child's everyday speech responses are used for analysis instead of the responses obtained in the controlled situations of the observation room.

8. The whole area of oral recitation needs to be studied in relation to the pupil's development of speech and his speaking personality. Perhaps we could learn something about the technique of asking questions of children and of drawing out their answers in such a way as to give them a greater preponderance of successful speech experiences than is often the case. Does the problem of stagefright take root in the child's life during these question and answer periods in which he faces a dual problem of ad-

justing his speech to the group and of saying things he is not prepared to relate? What would be the results if the children asked more of the questions and the teacher did more of the answering?

9. It is common for some parents and teachers to encourage children to learn and recite selections very early in life. In many Sunday schools it is the practice to have the child memorize biblical verses. Research is needed to find out more about the effect of such experiences on the child and his speech stability. What is the nature of the social load the child carries when he does such reciting? At what age level is it best to encourage these performances if at all; and what principles in handling them could be uncovered by experimental evidence?

10. What could we learn about the effect on the older child produced by his participation in school plays, operettas, and skits? These speech activities are extremely common in schools everywhere; and, in the main, the casting of children for parts seems to be dominated more by the teacher's desire for a successful production than by a careful consideration of the values which might accrue to the individual child. What are the effects on the child of having a part in the school play? How does it affect the older child's speech style? Do people tend to incorporate in their speech the lines or phrases they have learned in a play? Do they incorporate in their regular speech the intonation patterns, facial expression, and bodily movement which they were taught in the play? Does participation in the school play perceptibly alter the student's personality?

11. Some speech teachers are still advocating singing as a means of improving speaking skills, especially in the areas of breath control, articulation, and voice quality. Are there some psychological relationships between singing and speaking which have been overlooked? Is there any transfer of training from the singing process or situation to the speaking process or situation?

12. There is need for research in the construction of speech aptitude tests and diagnostic speech tests. It occurs to the writer that as far as speech skills are concerned, paper and pencil tests will never serve the purpose except perhaps in testing certain abilities which may have a correlation with speech skills. Valid and reliable speech tests, when they are constructed, will probably have to be listening tests on the order of Seashore's records for the diagnosis of musical ability. Since the child learns speech by listening to it, it is possible that if we wish to measure objectively his speech progress and diagnose his shortcomings, we could do it by testing his listening discrimination and discernment by means of standardized recordings. Such recordings might even do a better job of testing some aspects of vocabulary development than the standardized multiple-choice printed tests, since the sound of a word is not the same as the looks of it on a printed page. Every auditory component of speech could be tested by standardized recordings on the assumption that what the individual may not hear or notice in the speech of others he may not have established in his own speech. However that may be, his awareness and recognition of speech components could certainly be tested. Such tests would, of course, have to be presented to the subject well above his hearing acuity threshold so that slight hearing loss would not materially affect the results of the test.

Albums of such records might be developed which would test a wide number of speech elements including word choice and usage, logic and artistry in phrasing (word grouping), emphasis, inflectional patterns and meaning, articulation of sounds, and even the logical development of points of argument or explanation.

This whole area of the diagnosis and measurement of speech abilities is one in which an upsurge of research is needed if we are to meet the needs of school children in speech education.

13. When students look up words in dictionaries, they usually can read what the words mean, but they frequently cannot decipher the systems used to indicate how the words are pronounced. Some studies are in order to determine to what extent this is true, but it appears to be a question of the student's learning what diacritical symbols mean and how to use the key words which are only of value if the student knows exactly how to pronounce the key words themselves. There are several dictionaries which employ different systems of diacritical marks, thus complicating matters further. In addition, phonetic alphabets appearing in speech and English textbooks lack agreement and so add further confusion. What can be done to standardize such pronunciation marking systems for school use so that a student could learn early how to determine pronunciation and syllabic emphasis from printed symbols? Is part of the problem concerned with the teaching all through school of key words through which all pronunciation would be indicated? Are we back again now to the question of teaching the phonetic elements of speech as such in the primary grades?

14. More studies ought to be made of conversational speech in view of the fact that by far the greatest proportion of the person's verbal output is conversational and not formal speech. Since the study of speech is so justifiably concerned with the extent to which it can throw light on the social behavior of the person speaking, studies in conversation might have far-reaching educational implications.

In what ways does the speech of the trained speaker change when he is engaged not in a formal speaking situation but in spontaneous conversation? What are the individual differences in regard to conversational habits and patterns? Why do some people "make conversation" in preference to having mutual silence? What are the salient differences in the conversational patterns of children when compared with those of adults? Do children ask more

questions of each other than do adults? To what extent do people register frank, motivated, responsive, and sincere conversation as contrasted with conversation that consciously attempts to be socially manipulative? What is the actual mechanism behind disagreement in conversational exchanges when the conversation is overheard and when it is not? What situations condition the talkativeness of children in conversation? What environmental factors determine the topics of conversation among children? How may we use what we learn about the child's conversation in his speech education program?

15. Some study should be made to see how instruction in lip reading would affect the speaking habits of normal hearing children. Would their developing awareness of the movement of the visible speech organs and their focus of attention on such activity cause them to develop more precise articulatory movements in ordinary speaking? It might also be of interest to find out how much lip reading the normal hearing person actually does without being aware of it.

Needed Research in Speech Pathology

The research literature in the area of speech defects, their symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment, is extensive. Probably the greatest amount of time and energy has been spent in investigating stuttering; and there is not much to show for a large part of it. This, however, is true of the research in any area. Lately there has been an increase in the amount of published material having to do with cleft-palate speech, but a great deal of experimental work needs to be done in devising better methods of speech training for those hare-lip and cleft-palate children who have received all that surgery has to offer them. Also, there has been a phenomenal increase of research work in problems of hearing impairment, in speech training for the acoustically handicapped, and in audiometric evaluation. The work in the field of hearing as

well as that in the field of aphasia (loss of speech from brain damage) was greatly stimulated by war-time research in Army and Navy hospitals.

As this author sees it, too many research workers are following old lines of research; their thinking and their efforts are channeled too narrowly by the research findings and conventions of the past. What is needed is more creativity, more bold venture, without specifically constructed hypotheses for the research, if necessary. Though it may be heresy in the scientific world to say so, a great number of new discoveries and ideas have come to us by accident during the course of what seemed like wild, outlandish, blind investigation.

The field of speech pathology is not so far removed from general speech education as it may seem. It has probably been from the field of speech pathology that the greatest motivation for the scientific study of speech has come; and it is from speech pathology that we have learned a great deal about the normal development of speech. In fact, speech pathology has provided us with a direct avenue to the study of many forms of human behavior. Studies of abnormalities and their remedy are often more productive in the development of educational principles than are the studies of normalities alone. Developments in remedial reading, for example, have taught us much about teaching reading to everyone. Our knowledge regarding the functioning of the human brain could not have been gained without the study of the defective brain. When we study speech deviations severe enough to be called defects, we evolve principles and methods that are applicable as well to the training of normal speaking persons.

Let us suggest a few problems in the area of speech pathology which need investigation:

1. It is an observed fact that distractions will help a stutterer during a given moment get out of a blockage in his speech. He often organizes for himself certain distraction devices

to help himself. Sometimes he will whistle, stick out his tongue, jerk his head, squint his eyes or frown, or suddenly change his mind about the word he was going to say and utter another. If we subject him to mild pain or discomfort, speak along with him, or put a buzzing sound in his ear, he may be distracted enough to recover more quickly from his spasms. Why do such distraction devices work for a while and then, when he gets used to them, cease to be of any help at all? What is the principle behind distraction as a momentary aid to the stutterer?

2. If, and when, adequate means are developed for the measurement of attention, would we find stutterers to have greater distractability than normal speakers? Do they have difficulty focusing attention and concentrating on various tasks? Could studies of attention in stuttering individuals be correlated with personality studies around a tentative hypothesis that neurotic tendencies, if they exist, would militate against the person's ability to focus and sustain attention?

3. There is no conclusive evidence as yet that stutterers have basic personality disturbances which might account for their speech problem. While more research is needed concerning emotional factors connected with stuttering, the outcomes of all such personality studies seem to have been in doubt because of the limitations of the testing instruments and methods. First, we had better develop better tests than we now have, and this includes the projective techniques such as the Thematic Apperception Tests and Rorschach's ink-blots. We may as well recognize the fact that the validity of every known personality test is open to question.

4. Investigators have studied the development of speech in the individual and have gathered much data concerning the acquisition of speech sounds from the time of infancy on. Similarly, many studies have been made of

speech improvement on the part of individuals in various age brackets. Some interesting data might be obtained from studying speech deterioration under certain conditions. What changes take place in speech as an individual loses his hearing? Experimental conditions could be set up in which subjects would not hear themselves speak, a sort of artificial deafness induced by means of noise effects. An objective analysis of the acoustic changes in speech resulting from the experimental deprivation of hearing could be obtained from kymographic and oscillographic recordings. Such investigations might throw some light on the function of the tactile and kinaesthetic senses of speech organs in learning and regulating speech. It might provide more useful data than we could obtain from the speech of those who have become deafened later in life, since comparisons between speech with hearing and speech without hearing could be made in the same individual.

5. It has been thought that one reason why children misarticulate speech sounds is that their parents speak too rapidly, not loudly enough, or not distinctly enough. Research should be done regarding the speech habits and speech activity of parents who have children with functional articulatory defects or with delayed speech.

6. Some of the recent experiments with the critical frequency at which various individuals fuse light-flicker might be interesting if applied to persons who stutter. Since the ability to fuse such flicker at certain critical frequencies so that it appears to be a steady light seems

to be a central and not a peripheral process, something might be learned in regard to brain activity and stuttering. Although some studies in *phi phenomena* have been made with stutterers, the results have not been at all clear.

7. Attempts should be made to get more introspective information from those who have various types of speech defects. It will have to come, of course, from those who are above average intelligence and who are capable of penetrating self-analysis. All of the basic information we have about speech defects and their accompanying emotional problems has come from what we have observed in those who have the defects. It is suggested that much of what we are not able to observe might be learned by cultivating the introspective abilities of speech defectives.

The purpose of this article has been to present some thinking which might stimulate some new and needed research. It has not attempted to review the extensive research which has already been done. When a research problem is proposed, there is usually more than just a problem being suggested; a train of thought may be started. The researcher looking for something of significance to investigate may discover that his own mind revolves too much in the same orbit as he mulls over the type of problems he would like to answer. This author hopes that some of the suggestions for research in speech which he has presented will at least help start a train of thought in the mind of the reader to the end that it may lead to even better problems than the ones specifically proposed here.

Look and Listen

Edited by RAOUL R. HAAS¹

The average individual in the United States spends three times as much time listening to the radio as he does reading newspapers, and five times as much as reading magazines. This, and other challenging facts for teachers of the language arts, was revealed in a recently completed nationwide audience study sponsored jointly by the Columbia Broadcasting System and the National Broadcasting System Radio Networks.

Unlike most earlier audience surveys, the study measured listening done by individuals rather than by family groups. All findings of the survey are, therefore, projectable to the entire U. S. population.

The study, which was conducted by the American Research Bureau, uncovered much new information about set ownership and listening habits. For example, it revealed that radio-TV homes now have more radio sets than radio-only homes have. In every hundred families with television there are now some 253 radio sets in working order. In every hundred families without television there are 219 radios. Furthermore, 46% of the television families have three or more radios; a smaller proportion— 35% —of all radio-only families have three or more radios.

The study also measured time spent with printed media. The time, in minutes, spent with major media daily by the average person, is:

Listening to radio. 109 minutes.
Reading newspapers. 35 minutes.
Reading magazines. 19 minutes.

Of the three mass media of communication surveyed, radio would appear to be the most potent in terms of popular interest. From this

¹Mr. Haas is Director, the North Side Branch, Chicago Teachers College.

and other data contained in the research, at least two implications for the language arts teacher may be drawn.

1. The teacher of communication will have to assume increasingly the responsibility for instruction in effective listening, and,

2. He will need to engage in curriculum revision to meet the demand for listening activities over those of reading and writing—important as these are—in terms of social utility.

●How suitable is educational television for the classroom? Can television follow proven audio-visual principles? Only through a thorough study of the problems involved, writes J. J. Jehring², can one find the answers to the questions: What is the place of educational television in the classroom?

Jehring examines some of the principles underlying effective utilization of audio-visual instructional materials and, in terms of their applicability or nonapplicability to television, proposes recommendations which are of interest to teachers in all subject matter areas who are considering the utilization of telecasts in their classrooms.

The first problem is that of teacher preview and preparation. These are perhaps the most important steps in using audio-visual materials effectively and Jehring questions whether in television a substitute can be found for preview. Follow-up, he points out, is also important if educational goals are to be attained. The second problem faced by educational television, then, is the unlikelihood of effective follow-up immediately after viewing because of lack of previous planning.

A third problem is the need for repeating ²"Can Classroom TV Follow These Proven Audio-Visual Principles?" *See and Hear*, October 1951. Pp. 12-13.

audio-visual materials in some cases, particularly in the presentation of information and skill-training types of content. How can this be done with a television program? How can television be adopted to the change of pace necessary for adequate use of the material? The telecast cannot be stopped at a particular frame or turned off after a particular sequence for a discussion before proceeding to the next sequence. The final considerations are whether education can afford the cost of high quality live television educational shows and adaptation of television shows to the class schedule. The ways in which student participation may be encouraged also presents a problem, Jehring says.

Before large expenditures be made for educational television, Jehring proposes that extensive experiments be conducted to determine the effectiveness of classroom educational television as compared with the methods of classroom audio-visual instruction currently in use. These studies, he emphasizes, must be carried on by competent research people in the area of educational psychology. Also, educational leaders would do well to beware of so-called research presented in the form of teacher interviews on the use and effectiveness of television programs in the classroom, opinions of experts, etc. While these may serve a purpose, Jehring believes, they should not be considered a substitute for a substantial research program conducted by qualified university experts.

Broadcast Utilization Activities

The publication of excerpts from the Chicago Public School's Radio Council and Station WBEZ publication, *Broadcast Utilization Activities*, was begun in the March issue of "Look and Listen." The following are additional activities suggested in this valuable bulletin, activities which are applicable to any broadcast.

● Library Reading and Reference

1. Individuals or committees may do library reading or research (assigned or volun-

tary) on numerous topics related to the broadcast.

2. Students may consult librarians for related-reading recommendations and for printed versions of the broadcast story. Librarians frequently arrange special book shelves for broadcast supplementation.

3. Teachers may arrange reading tables and reference shelves in the classroom where children may refer to books brought in from their personal libraries or school and public libraries.

● Committee Activities

1. Through committee organization, much follow-up activity may be accomplished in several related subject areas. One committee may elect to track down the necessary background information through research; another may wish to make the illustrations for posters, wall charts, and other utilization display forms; a third might work on the vocabulary study involved; another could bring in the library books for supplementary reading.

2. Additional committees may be appointed to arrange displays, keep broadcast announcements before the group, take charge of the receiver, etc.

3. Out-of-school listening (radio) and viewing (TV and film) committees might report back to the class on related radio, television and motion picture programs.

4. Bulletin board and other displays may be arranged to advertise future broadcasts. Book jackets and cut-outs related to programs being broadcast may be exhibited, as well as recommendations for out-of-school program listening.

5. Informal exhibits of arts, crafts, manufactured articles and products related to broadcast content may be displayed.

● Broadcast Presentation Techniques

1. Carry over broadcast presentation techniques to make both follow-up and other classroom procedures dynamic, live, and attention

getting. Try the interview techniques instead of the usual oral or written composition. Use the newscast style for giving current events. Use a "Quiz Panel" for question-answer subjects. Try writing an original script, using the drama form. Use spot announcements to put over school drives and campaigns. Try "singing commercials" on such messages as brotherhood, safety, health, and a host of educational objectives. Invite other classes, parents and guests to broadcast presentations to provide an audience situation. Take advantage of all opportunities to appear in actual on-the-air programs at local broadcasting studios.

2. Arrange for studio visits to provide for a better understanding of the radio and television industry as a mass medium of communication.

3. Present an assembly in mock radio or television style, complete with engineer, producer-director, sound effects assistants, actors, musicians and full cast. Give cues, directional signals. The whole may be produced in true radio or TV style, using public address or make-believe microphones.

New A-V Materials

Announcements of a number of new instructional films and filmstrips have been received by "Look and Listen." Among those which would appear to have value are the following, arranged by subject matter areas.

● Arithmetic

1. Continuing its policy of producing teaching filmstrips for all areas of established elementary, junior and senior high school curricula, the Audio-Visual Division of Popular Science Publishing Company, 353 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, has released six new Teach-O-Filmstrips for three subject fields: language arts, arithmetic and science. *Adventures with Numbers*, six filmstrips, full color, is designed for grades four through six. Using a functional approach, it teaches children how arithmetical

principles and processes grow out of and fulfill the needs of daily life. It employs cartoons, drawings, charts and other eye-appealing techniques to make abstract ideas understandable and readily retained. The price is \$31.50 for the series complete with illustrated teaching guide and hard cover file container.

2. *What Time Is It?* (1 reel, sound, color (\$100) or b&w (\$50); Educational Collaborator: F. Lynwood Wren, Professor of Mathematics, George Peabody College for Teachers.) Coronet Films, 66 E. South Water Street, Chicago 1. In this delightful motion-picture story, children learn the fun of telling time. The interesting devices by which the film portrays the story of seven-year old Barbara Stevens hold the attention of the children while teaching them the various aspects of the importance of telling time and of time itself. Pupils learn new words useful in reading, story-telling and discussion. They become familiar with arithmetic and counting problems associated with telling time. And they learn how people live and work together through being able to measure and tell time.

● Art

1. *Let's Paint With Water Color*. (1 reel, sound, color (\$100) or b&w (\$50); Educational Collaborator: George T. Miller, Chief, Art Education, Pennsylvania Department of Public Instruction.) Coronet. The main objectives of this film are to motivate interest in creative water color painting, to motivate careful use of water color equipment, and to illustrate some methods and skills of water color painting. Three basic techniques for achieving different effects in the pictures painted are clearly demonstrated. Intended for primary and intermediate grades.

● Language Arts

1. *Goals In Spelling*. Six filmstrips, full color, 263 frames. Designed for use in elementary grades four through six to develop an

understanding of the sounds that make up words and speech.

2. *Coach For Good English*. Six full color filmstrips, each dealing with an aspect of sentence structure. Geared to grades seven through nine. Both *Coach For Good English* and *Goals In Spelling* are accompanied by teaching guides. Price of each is \$31.50 from the Audio-Visual Division of Popular Science Publishing Company.

3. *Better Study Habits Series*. Designed especially for the middle grades and junior high school, this series of filmstrips provides the teacher with a teaching tool to stimulate interest in the improvement of some of the basic study skills. Individual filmstrip titles are: "Improving Your Reading," "Improve Your Spelling," "Improve Your Handwriting," "Improve Your Vocabulary," "Improve Your Punctuation," and "Improve Your Study Habits." Each tells why the study skill is important to the student's present and future work and explains how he can improve in that skill. The set, averaging about 45 frames, may be purchased from Young America Films, Inc., 18 East 41 Street, New York 17, or any YAF dealer, at \$30.00 per set of six filmstrips.

4. *Type and Its Origin*. A full color sound slidefilm. 96 frames, available with 78 or 33-1/3 records; playing time 16 minutes. For sale to accredited schools at \$17.50. Rental arrangements available upon request. Monsen. Chicago, Inc., Educational Department, 22 East Illinois Street, Chicago 1. In the colorful frames that compose the film, students can relive Man's age-old struggle to record his thoughts. They see and hear described actual examples of the important steps in the development of the printed word—from the first crude markings on cave walls up through the most modern typography.

The subject is presented in a dramatic form that is interesting and easy to understand for all age groups. The film can be used from the fifth

grade up through college levels to show the romance that lies behind present-day books and magazines. Sponsored by one of the nation's leading typographic houses, the film is free of commercialism.

A companion illustrated booklet (also entitled *Type and Its Origin*) has been prepared for classroom use in conjunction with the film. It briefs the subject and helps pupils review and retain what they saw on the screen. A copy of this booklet will be sent without charge to all readers of "Look and Listen." For a copy and full information, address Monsen. Chicago, Inc., at the above address.

5. *The Adventures of Willie Skunk*. (1 reel, \$45.00.) Especially written and produced for the language arts and science program at the primary level, this film is the story of Mother Skunk and her five babies, and features Willie, the baby who always manages to get into trouble. Photographed by John A. Haeseler, the film has a narration written by Munro Leaf. Content and treatment of the film have been especially planned so as to implement and enrich language arts and science programs at the primary level. Young America Films, Inc.

6. *Golden Book Series, Set No. 3*. Eight full color filmstrips based on a Little Golden Book of the same title, the series contains "Katie, the Kitten," "Seven Sneezes," "Circus Time," "The Fuzzy Duckling," "We Like To Do Things," "Color Kittens," "Fix It Please," and "A Year on the Farm." Designed for use in the kindergarten and primary grade reading program, the price of the set of eight is \$23.75. Young America Films, Inc.

7. *The Fox and The Rooster*. Enacted entirely by farm and forest animals, this is the ancient Aesop fable illustrating the moral that even a clever schemer can be outsmarted when good friends help each other. Produced in collaboration with Miss Grace Storm, assistant professor of education at the University of

Chicago, the film is intended for primary grade reading and language arts classes. The price is \$50.00 from Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, Wilmette, Illinois, or its regional libraries.

8. *Literature Appreciation: Stories*. (1¼ reels, sound, color (\$125) or b&w (\$62.50); Educational Collaborator: William J. Iversen, Assistant Professor of Education, Stanford University.) This film will increase the interest of students in the appreciation and enjoyment of great literature. They will learn how to approach stories for a better understanding, how to interpret the various types of stories, and how to develop an appreciation of the fine stories which have been written. Intended for junior and senior high school and adult audiences, the film is available through Coronet Films.

9. *How Effective Is Your Reading?* (1 reel, sound, color (\$100) or b&w (\$50); Educational Collaborator: Ruth Strang, professor of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University.) Coronet Films. Though students vary widely in reading skills, this film will help each improve his reading habits, for faster reading and for better comprehension. Skimming for overview; fast reading for general understanding; slow, careful reading for precise information, and other important techniques are presented to help the junior and senior high school student and adults in various reading situations with different types of materials.

10. *The Easter Season*. (1 reel, b&w and color; rental or purchase prices on application to Coronet Films.) Shows the origins of some of our customs at Eastertime, comparing our Easter observances with the comparable spring festivals of other lands and other times. The background of eggs, rabbits, the sun and moon and bright colors in relation to Easter is dramatically portrayed. Not concerned with the specific religious meanings that are associated with Easter, the film regards the holiday as the climax of a joyous rebirth of life in the earth;

as the narrator says: "Springtime is the Easter season, a time of happiness, a time for celebration."

● Science

1. *Golden Nature Guides*. Based on a Golden Nature Guide of the same title, here are three visual reference libraries for elementary and high school science and nature study classes. Each guide is a package containing a copy of the 157 page book and four color filmstrips which reproduce the illustrations contained in the book. The guides are: "American Birds" (112 color paintings, \$16.50), "American Wildflowers" (134 paintings, \$16.50), and "American Insects" (color portraits of 225 familiar insects, \$16.50). Purchase from any YAF dealer or directly from Young America Films, Inc.

2. *The Life Span*,

3. *Physical and Chemical Changes In Everyday Living*, and

4. *Health and Personal Appearance*. Three full color filmstrip series following a horizontal-vertical structure, covering the same subject in each strip, but with increasing complexity for higher grade levels. Each series, therefore, provides one strip each for lower, middle and upper elementary divisions. The three strips and the guide for each series are packaged together in a permanent, hardcover file box. Price of each series is \$19.50 complete from Audio-Visual Division of Popular Science Publishing Company.

5. *Parade of the Relays*. (A 10-minute b&w film, distributed by your local Bell Telephone Company.) The functions of the telephone relay as an electric switching device in handling 150,000,000 telephone calls every day are explained in this film, produced for the Bell Telephone System by the Jam Handy Organization, Detroit. It shows the functions of telephone relays in a simple manner through a combination of on-the-scene photography, anima-

tion and stop motion techniques. Specially written music accompanies the picture so that every movement of the relays is rhythmical and in cadence with the music.

6. *Monarch Butterfly Story*. (1 reel, color, running time: 16 minutes. \$100.) Intended for middle grades science and language arts classes, this film is designed to provide a stimulus for further study and observation, not only of butterflies, but also of other types of insect and animal life. The consecutive steps in the life cycle of the butterfly and, in a broader sense, an illustration of the basic problems of adaptation and reproduction characteristics of similar animals, the film may be used for school assembly programs, for scout and nature study groups, and for adult groups desiring educational program material. Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, Inc.

● Social Studies

1. *Builders of America*, six film biographies, includes lives of Eli Whitney, Horace Mann, Abraham Lincoln, Susan B. Anthony, Booker T. Washington, and Andrew Carnegie. As the life of each of these persons is recreated, the film biography reconstructs the childhood environment and the situations and character drives which formed the basis for their future greatness. Specific incidents in their lives which influenced the course of history or changed the pattern of American development are recreated. Each film examines the special skills which made these people the effective personalities they were, recounts their contribution to American life and explains how these changes continue to be important to-day. (2 reels, 16mm, b&w, sound. Running time: 17 minutes. Purchase price, each, \$85, or rental, \$4.50 for one to three days' use and \$1 per day thereafter.) Intended for use in junior and senior high school history, civics and social studies classes and for all adult groups. Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, Inc.

2. *Maps and Their Uses*. (1 reel, sound, color (\$100) or b&w (\$50); Educational Collaborator: Erwin Raisz, Lecturer in Cartography, Institute of Geographical Exploration, Harvard University.) This film, which provides an introduction to the study of special symbols in maps, presents a variety of special purpose maps and demonstrates the different uses to which these maps and their symbols may be put. How to read a map is shown by describing a scale of distances, a grid and legend. Then uses of contour maps for understanding the various topographical formations follow to point out the importance of maps in everyday living. Junior and senior high school. Coronet Films.

3. *Our Inheritance From the Past*. (1 reel, sound, color (\$100) or b&w (\$50); Educational Collaborator: I. James Quillen, Professor of Education, Stanford University.) How much of our modern civilization is a product of the past? In this film, the contributions of the past to our modern life are presented resulting in a better understanding and appreciation of historic advances. By studying past civilizations and their accomplishments, the fact that our modern world is actually a product of the past is made dramatically clear. Intended for junior and senior high school, college and adult. Coronet Films.

4. *The British Isles: The Land and The People*. (1 reel, sound, color (\$100) or b&w (\$50); Educational Collaborator: Thomas Frank Barton, Associate Professor of Geography, Indiana University.) How do fifty-three million people live on two islands about the size of Idaho and Maine? To understand this is to understand the geography of the British Isles. Key to the answer is the exchange of imports and exports. Through this film, audiences will gain a strong, clear concept of how and why the people of the British Isles have made excellent use of their limited space and resources; how they have built their island into one of the

(Continued on Page 176)

The Educational Scene

Edited by
WILLIAM A. JENKINS¹

In the course of perusing some professional periodicals we had two treats—two narratives by a pair of teachers who can write, interestingly, and fortunately, by using a minimum of educational clichés and *gobbledy-gook*.

"Marvin's Just That-a-Way," by Mary Elizabeth Vroman, appeared in the October *NEA Journal*. It is the story of Marvin, a boy found in many classes, who was tough, with an exterior of steel which he used to hide a gnawing need, the need for some place to attach his deepest emotions. Marvin couldn't be reached, but Miss Anthony reached him and put another pupil on his way to emotionally healthy development.

On the subject of the second writer we are frankly prejudiced. It is the once teacher, now poet and novelist, Jesse Stuart. From his experience in the "hill country" of Kentucky Mr. Stuart has an autobiographical narrative "Charles" in the January 9 issue of *Scholastic Teacher*. It tells of the experiences of neophyte-teacher Jason Stringer with his fourteen pupils at Red Hot High School.

Stringer's challenges and how he met them could be an inspiration to any teacher in a small school laboring under unfavorable conditions—lack of equipment, inadequate pay, and inexperience. A lesson might be learned from Stringer's capitalization on the assets of the situation, the most important of which was the desire of his pupils to learn. For those who may find our didactic view of the story dulling, we nevertheless recommend "Charles" as very good reading.



The question of whether the school librarian is first a teacher and then a librarian is still

being thrashed out in some sectors. Like the chicken-egg question it may never be settled but just continue to lead its pursuers in circles. However agreement is found on what the librarian should be like, what she should do, and what her place of business—the school library—should represent. An article, "The Action-Packed Library", by Roy E. Learned in the October *NEA Journal* will give many teachers a good picture of what their school library and librarian *could* be like and, perish the thought, might help many school librarians to mend their ways and establishments.

Rather than attempt to summarize Mr. Learned's outstanding article here we recommend that teachers (and librarians) read the article in the original. For those who may not be able to do so we will list a few of the points stressed by Mr. Learned:

1. The librarian is familiar with every phase of the curriculum and units underway in the classroom.
2. The librarian keeps an up-to-date file of places in the community suitable for field trips.
3. The community-minded librarian looks beyond the school and pupils for ways to help parents.
4. The librarian does not stress books they think children *should* read.
5. The librarian tries to grow as a teacher by participating in curriculum-planning, conferences, faculty meetings, and daily classroom work.

Mr. Learned's article is based on six of the 51 articles appearing in the Thirtieth Yearbook of the NEA Department of Elementary School Principals, *Elementary School Libraries Today*.

¹John Deere Junior High School, Moline, Ill.

The six articles were contributed by six members of the Department. The Yearbook (415 pp.) may be ordered from the NEA, 1201 16th Street NW, Washington 6. Price to non-members is three dollars. To those not wishing to buy the Yearbook we again heartily recommend Mr. Learned's article in the *NEA Journal*.



Teachers in the upper elementary grades and in the junior high school may find the Teen Age Book Club a boon for the avid young readers in their classes. The club offers a wide variety of teen-age pocket-size books at 25 to 35 cents. For these grade books selected are in the Junior Division. The Senior Division is for high school students.

Among the advantages offered by the club is the fact that students are required to buy no minimum number of books although each class order must be for a minimum of ten books. Dividends are paid for each four books ordered in the form of any book on previous lists or from a list of "Old Favorites." Dividends are paid in June and January.

Three of the book club Selection Committee are well known to NCTE members: E. Louise Noyes, Max J. Herzberg, and Mark A. Neville. The other two members on the committee are Margaret Scoggins and Richard J. Hurley.

Teachers interested in finding out about the Teen Age Book Club and obtaining a copy of a sample book may write to the club at 351 Fourth Avenue, New York 10.



How to Find Out About the United Nations, available for fifteen cents from International Documents Service, Columbia University Press, 2960 Broadway, New York 27, lists documents, services, materials, films, etc., which are available on the U. N.



We liked this picture of the "Good Teacher at Work," by Gwen Horsman published in the January 9 *Scholastic Teacher*:

A good teacher, according to Miss Horsman:

1. Knows her pupils.
2. Knows her subject matter.
3. Prepares for recitation periods according to students' capacities.
4. Explains assignments fully and makes them important.
5. Provides assignments that fit varying degrees of ability.
6. Uses the blackboard.
7. Arranges seating carefully—grouping pupils by learning needs.
8. Commends performance.
9. Respects each contribution.
10. Encourages responses. Restates and "clues" questions if necessary.
11. Shares students' interests.
12. Respects her students.



If you are having trouble in your language arts classes teaching pupils how to conduct a meeting, or if you have trouble leading them yourself, the article, "Don't Be Chairman of the Bored!" by Walter Weir, may be "emergency aid."

In part, Mr. Weir says:

1. Never start a meeting without an agenda.
2. State the purpose of the meeting at the beginning and read the agenda aloud.
3. Keep the meeting moving.
4. Speak clearly.
5. Prevent general hubbub.
6. Avoid talking to individuals.
7. Keep the speaker talking clearly and audibly.
8. Sum up what the speaker has said and obtain a decision.

9. Stop aimless discussion by recommending committee action.

10. Keep control of the meeting at all times without stifling free comment.

11. Don't argue with the speaker.

12. To comment ask for the floor.

13. Don't squelch a trouble-maker—let the meeting do it.

14. Be aware of the participants' physical comfort.

Mr. Weir's informative article appeared in the *Michigan Education Journal* and was reprinted in the *New Jersey Educational Review* for December.



Threshold and *The Kindred Spark* are two fifteen-minute radio transcriptions, part of the over-all program of the NEA Division of Press and Radio Relations in supplying public relations materials to school people.

Threshold is the story of Toby, a first-grader who took his own time about learning to read, and Toby's granddad. *The Kindred Spark* is an answer to the criticism that our schools are not teaching American history.

These two programs are being released on the same platter; cost is \$10. It may be ordered from the NEA Division of Press and Radio Relations, 1201 16th Street NW, Washington 6.



A new series of recordings, based on the *Landmark Books*, which are published by Random House, is being prepared at present. These records will be issued by Enrichment Materials, Inc., a new organization formed to produce recordings of great events from the nation's past. The project is under the direction of Martha Huddleston, well known for originating the Teen Age Book Club.

The first titles, which were ready in January, are based on *The Voyages of Christopher Columbus* by Armstrong Sperry, *The Pony Ex-*

press by Samuel Hopkins Adams, *The California Gold Rush* by May McNeer, and *The Landing of the Pilgrims* by James Daugherty. Additional recordings of *Landmark Books* are planned for release at regular intervals from January. Each record will contain, as background for the straight dramatic presentation, authentic music of the period.

A guide, of value to teachers and librarians who may wish to make professional use of the records, is being prepared.

All titles will be issued in both standard and long-playing speed on non-breakable records. Playing time for each title is 15 minutes.

For further information write to Enrichment Materials, Inc., 246 Fifth Avenue, New York 1.



Here are the Junior Literary Guild selections for the month of March, 1952:

For boys and girls 6, 7, and 8 years of age: *Summer Is Fun* by Lavinia R. Davis. Doubleday and Company, \$2.50.

For boys and girls 9, 10, and 11 years of age: *Ban-Joe and Grey Eagle*, by Isabel McLennan McMeekin. Franklin Watts, Inc., \$2.50.

For older girls, 12 to 16 years of age: *Sleeping Mines*, by Gertrude E. Finney. Longmans, Green and Company, \$2.50.

For older boys, 12 to 16 years of age: *Sentinel In The Saddle*, by Lloid and Juanita Jones. The Westminster Press, \$2.50.



Can you help the NCTE Committee on Censorship of Instructional Materials answer such questions as these:

Within the last five or six years have any books (or specific selections from them), periodicals, films, recordings, or other instructional materials been banned or placed under restricted use in your school? Were these for use in the library or in the English classroom? How

did these materials happen to come under serious criticism? What person or group opposed their use? On what grounds: Moral or ethical? religious? social? economic? political? other? What action was taken in your school and community toward such criticism?

To what extent, do you think, has fear of censorship or criticism influenced staff members in your school to avoid the free use of materials in the classroom or library that might be considered controversial in these times? What steps have the English teachers in your school taken to improve the technique used in the selection of instructional materials? What procedures have you or members of your staff developed for the successful handling of controversial topics in the classroom?

The Committee on Censorship hopes to complete its study within the next sixty days. The findings are to be published by the NCTE in a bulletin on "Censorship and Controversy." If the publication is useful in meeting increasing challenges to our traditional privilege of freedom of study and inquiry, the Committee must have specific information of the type requested. It is hoped that each of the twelve thousand members of the Council who may have a contribution to make will write promptly to: William R. Wood, Chairman of the Committee on Censorship, Division of Higher Education, U. S. Office of Education, Washington 25, D. C.



LOOK AND LISTEN

(Continued from Page 172)

world centers of shipping and trade. Intermediate, junior and senior high schools. Coronet Films.

5. *Ancient Greece*. (1 reel, sound, color (\$100) or b&w (\$50); Educational Collaborator: Elmer Louis Kayser, Professor of History, The George Washington University.)

Grades 5 through 9, senior high, college and adult. Coronet Films. In words and pictures, the film, which was photographed primarily in Greece, brings to life an exciting historical period. Documentary in form, it offers an ideal dramatization of one of the high points in human civilization.

Review and Criticism

For the Teacher

Elementary School Administration and Supervision. By Willard S. Elsbree and Harold J. McNally. American Book, \$4.50.

Those persons concerned with the evolution of the position of the elementary school principal and his responsibility for planning the total school program will find this volume a very useful reference.

It is organized into seven sections each of which deals with a particular problem of the administrator or supervisor. Suggestions are given for the planning of additional programs or the evaluating of existing ones in terms of the modern school.

The position of the principal is a key one but the authority for making decisions is no longer vested in one person as the school program is a cooperative venture involving teachers, members of the community, and children.

In Chapter 16, "Pupil Adjustment and Health Services," the authors emphasize the fact that self-development for pupils is the ultimate goal of the school. School discipline is enforced as a means to an end.

The content of the book is in a definite, readable form with a well selected bibliography for additional references for the college student or principal.

Grace Rawlings

Theory and Practice in the Elementary School.

By W. A. Saucier. Revised Edition. Macmillan.

This book discusses an educational program based on the demands of a changing society. Learning situations and teaching procedures are examined and judged in the light of a democratic philosophy. Throughout the book the author stresses the idea that "improvement of pupil's thinking should be the chief point of emphasis in teaching any subject in the elementary school".

Because it combines a discussion of theory with definite and practical examples of democratic teaching procedure, *Theory and Practice in the Elementary School* should be a valuable text for teachers in training, as well as a useful and inspiring aid to experienced teachers in the field.

Grace Rawlings

The Travelogue Storybook of the Nineteenth Century. By Virginia Haviland. Horn Book, \$2.25.

"The travelogue story book with foreign background which aimed to bring both profit and pleasure to young readers" was an important contribution of the nineteenth century. The development of trans-Atlantic steam navigation and the building of railways across the United States to the Pacific stimulated an interest in distant lands and travel which led to the writing of these famous travel series. Peter Parley's adventure, the Rollo books, Zigzag journey, the Knock About Club, the Vassar girls, and the Boy travellers are all described in this fascinating account. This is a Caroline Hewins Lecture presented in 1949 to the New England Library Association to pay honor to the memory of that great children's librarian who sponsored the development of professional standards in the field of children's books. Based on authentic research, this book is a useful contribution to the student of children's literature and will be read with delight by all those adults who learned their geography in the early nineteenth century through avid reading of these travelogue stories.

Elizabeth Williams

How to Help Your Child with Music. By M. Emmett Wilson. Illustrated. Henry Schuman, \$3.00.

Practical help for the parent wanting to bring music to the child. Answers for the old questions: "What age to begin?" "How long to practice?" "What medium and of what use will it be later in life?" are found as each in-

strument of the orchestra is discussed as well as voice and piano. Good photographs of 14 instruments. Adult use only. Catharine Stuart

Interlingua Grammar. By the International Auxiliary Language Association. Storm Publishers.

Prepared by Alexander Gode, Hugh E. Blair, and other members of the research staff of the International Auxiliary Language Association, this grammar is designed for use in conjunction with the Interlingua-English Dictionary. By careful study of these companion works, an intelligent student, especially one who already has a usable command of a Romance language, should quickly learn to read, write, or speak such sentences as the following: *Le Statos Unite, Russia, Anglaterra e su imperio es tres del grande potentias.* As a serious attempt to build a basic "pattern" language, instead of a strictly artificial one, Interlingua may enjoy more widespread popularity than previous attempts at the construction of an international language. Walter V. Kaulfers

For Early Adolescents

Dogs, Dogs, Dogs. By Phyllis Fenner, Ed. Illustrated by Manning deV. Lee. Franklin Watts, \$2.75.

Miss Fenner has again produced from her familiarity with good children's literature a useful anthology of two short stories and twelve chapters from books, mostly books for grades 6-8. Agnes Krarup

Man of the Family. By Ralph Moody. W. W. Norton, \$3.00.

This sequel to the popular *Little Britches* continues the story of the Moody Family as Mother, Ralph, and Grace struggle to hold the family together after Father's death. They meet the real problem of making a living with determination and ingenuity. Mother's gentle wisdom gives direction to their adjustment. *Man of the Family* offers a kind of wholesome and heartwarming reading which adults, as well as

older children, will find satisfying and enjoyable. Paul Hale

Introduction to Shakespeare. By Marchette Chute. Dutton, \$2.25.

Shakespeare, the actor, figures in this little book that is crammed full of authentic information, the result of careful scholarly research on the part of the author. The theatre was as important to young people in Shakespeare's day as the movies are today. Shakespeare wrote his plays to be acted. His major interest was in acting and he chose the career of an actor in preference to that of a poet. The London of Shakespeare's time, the dramatic ventures in building the first theatres, the costuming and training of the actors and the excitement attending a successful performance are all recreated vividly and realistically. Shakespeare's fellow actors become real people as their appreciation of the master playwright is described. Details of the writing of the plays and the reaction of the London audiences are recounted. This is a delightful account for those who have enjoyed the reading and performance of Shakespeare's plays and an indispensable "introduction" for all students, junior high school and above. Older readers will wish to follow this with the complete biography by the same author, *Shakespeare of London.*

Elizabeth Williams
Wild Horses of the Rio Grande. By George Cory Franklin. Houghton, \$3.00.

George Cory Franklin was a cowboy who "lived" everyone of these twelve horse stories. They are packed with information on breeding, branding, and training horses for work on the range of the Southwest. Boys and men will revel in these dramatic accounts of stallion fights, horse stealing and round-ups. Intelligent, resourceful horses and the courageous cowboys who tend them come alive in these tales. The beginning pages of the book include a glossary of ranch terms with delightful sketches, the history of famous early herds brought from Texas to the northern ranges of Colorado and Wyom-

ing, and accounts of old cattle ranches and how they came to be. The development and use of the branding system is also described with illustrations. Illustrations in color and black and white are by William Moyers. The book will appeal to junior high school readers especially.

Elizabeth Williams

Back to Mandalay. By Lowell Thomas. The Greystone Press, \$3.50.

Back to Mandalay is not as good a book as *With Lawrence in Arabia*, but it is far better than the average adventure story which junior high school boys read. It is an account of General Orde Wingate, guerilla fighter, and the American Air Commandos, with Burma as the chief locale. For teachers who want to use war stories, this is one of the best.

Leonard S. Kenworthy

Finders Keepers. By Reed Richardson. Illustrated by Don Freeman. Viking Press. \$2.50.

In a small Connecticut village three 12-year-old boys find a stray Saint Bernard whose tricks and rescuing habits indicate an unusual training. In their endeavor to provide the big dog with a suitable home the boys are assisted by sympathetic neighbors who, like themselves, are genuine dog lovers. It is finally necessary to call upon the law to establish the status quo of the problem pet and the local rascal who seeks his death. There is action and suspense crowned by a humorous boy-dog relationship. For grades five through seven.

Elizabeth M. Beal

Boy's Book of Modern Science. By S. M. Jennings. Illustrated by I. N. Steinberg. World Publishing Co., \$2.75.

Some young adolescents will collect anything—including facts. The fact-collecting, science-minded boy will find this a handy reference book. Others (especially the girls) will shy away from it. What advantage lies in adding the word "Boy's" to the title, evades me. Any girl who might be interested will find the title sufficiently discouraging. An adult will

think the book simpler than it really is. The contents range, alphabetically, from absolute zero to zinc. This arrangement tends to limit the book to direct reference use. As such, the book has a place in the junior or senior high school library. Simple line illustrations add to the book's format.

Herbert S. Zim

Moon Ahead. By Leslie Greener. Illustrated by William Pene Du Bois. Viking, \$2.50.

The exciting adventures of two boys who stowaway on the first rocket ship to the moon. Crammed with the latest scientific information about space ships, cosmic rays, meteors, asteroids and other related topics this will delight young people who want more science and less fiction in their reading.

Ruth Robinson

A Bridle for Pegasus. By Katherine B. Shippen. Illustrated by C. B. Falls. Viking Press. \$3.50.

Twenty-six adventures in flight from the legendary Icarus to the testing of the steel rocket in 1949 at the White Sands Proving Grounds in New Mexico. All accounts of man's experiences with flight are told in a fascinating manner for the airminded boy or girl from sixth grade up. Indexed.

Ruth Robinson

Prince Valiant in the Days of King Arthur. By Harold Foster with Max Trell. Illustrated by Harold Foster. Hastings House, \$2.75.

One of the most popular and superbly drawn comic strips of our day takes book form and readers from fifth grade to eighth will find *Prince Valiant* an exciting introduction to the legendary times of King Arthur. They might even be led to the fine adaptations of Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* by such writers as Lanier, Pyle and McCleod.

Ruth Robinson

Fiddling Cowboy in Search of Gold. By Adolph Regli. Franklin Watts, \$2.50.

Another tale of the adventures of Ross Gordon, who was introduced in the author's previous book, *Fiddling Cowboy*. Ross, a seven-

teen year old, is not content to follow his father's footsteps as a steamer pilot on the Mississippi. He leaves with a roving uncle for the Black Hills in search of gold. The author deals skillfully with the situation arising from the government orders to stay out of Sioux territory, which included the Black Hills, and the popular idea of freedom held by the feverish gold miners. Ross is divided between his sympathy for the Indians, his respect for law, and his desire to have some of the gold too. His fast horse, Dixie, figures in his successful scouting for General Crooks. The narrative is convincing but the characters are not quite real. Boys and some girls from 12-14 will find a little history here and much enjoyment.

Barbara D. Ewell

Not Without Danger. By Herbert Best. Illustrated by Erick Berry. Viking, \$2.50.

This rollicking adventure story of Dort Fuller, a sixteen year old of revolutionary times, is set first in his home colony, Connecticut, then on the high seas and finally in Jamaica. Dort is consistently high spirited and daring through his rebellion at home, his unwilling career as a pirate and his employment on the sugar plantation as a bookkeeper. On the side he took care of his uncle's interest in a shipment of fish, surveyed his absentee proprietor's estate boundaries to establish a land theft, and practiced "obeah," a local form of magic, on the superstitious natives. It is an engaging story, and if one occasionally questions the too smooth working of the plot, he is prone to forgive, and revel in the completely satisfactory ending.

Barbara D. Ewell

Stories of our American Patriotic Songs. By John H. Lyons. Illustrated by Jacob Landau. Vanguard, \$2.75.

Brief stories of the origin of 10 American songs of patriotism and freedom, giving also the words and music of each. Book appeared first a decade ago and has been useful as supplementary material for American history.

Catharine Stuart

For the Middle Grades

Just Like David. By Marguerite de Angeli. Doubleday, \$2.50.

David, Jeffrey, Henry, and their mother and father travel from eastern Pennsylvania to a new home near Cincinnati, Ohio. Through conversation and sight seeing the boys acquire knowledge of American history, people, and way of life which makes travelling fun. For Jeffrey, to whom a new home means the prospect of going to school and being "just like David," the trip is especially pleasing.

This does not have as much story appeal as other de Angeli books, but a special merit in that it is a good substitute for third and fourth grade readers. The author manages to pack a good deal of information into the story without making it ponderous, for she selects subjects that would interest any child taking a similar trip.

Mary Mason

Black Penny. By Phoebe Erickson. Knopf, \$2.50.

Emmy and Axel, Swedish children, lived on a Wisconsin farm at the turn of the century. Black Penny, the colt, whom Emmy raised and trained, provided fun and activity and also heartache when he was sold to city children who did not know or understand horses. Through circumstance and Emmy's ingenuity he was returned.

This will be liked as a horse story and also as a story of farm life. There is considerable detail about seasonal work and play, home life and Swedish customs, which is appealing and undoubtedly authentic, though, for the sake of the plot, less incident would have been more desirable. The main characters are well drawn, but the "city children" are not convincing, nor is the easy manner in which Emmy trains the horse. On the whole it is a wholesome and satisfying story.

Mary Mason

Ginny and Custard. By Frances Clarke Sayers. Illustrated by Eileen Evans. Viking, \$2.00.

Ginny Corbett and her mother and father come to Southern California from New York. The uncertainty about liking California when one has to live in a furnished duplex with no garden fades when the Corbetts begin to explore the missions, markets, Olvera Street, the beaches and countryside. Ginny makes friends and adopts Custard, the cat, who dispels the last traces of homesickness.

This story should be well received in California because the author's enthusiasm for its sunshine and charm is contagious. One cannot but partake of Ginny's pleasure in the sights and festivity of Olvera Street. There is also warm family relationship, though sophisticated conversation, humor and literary illusions make it a difficult book for the child with limited reading background.

Mary Mason

The House in Hiding. By Elinor Lyon. Coward. \$2.50.

The young English author of "Wishing Water Gate" and "Hilary's Island" offers another slight mystery and adventure story in the Scottish Highlands. While the two children of a local doctor are searching for a suitable camp site so that guests may occupy their room they uncover a mystery of long standing. What has previously passed for candid liveliness in Miss Lyon's juvenile characters may now be recognized as undisciplined bad manners. Dialogue and unusual setting cannot redeem what is an uninspired story, completely ruined by the actions of the bumptious children, Ian and Sovra Kennedy.

Elizabeth M. Beal

The Pastor's Dog. By Jean Heavey. Illustrated by Elinore Blaisdell. Scribner's, \$2.00.

Students at St. Bridgit's Parochial School were accustomed to seeing their pastor accompanied by a shaggy black-and-gray dog. Besides being close friends Father Coyle and Spot adhered to an established routine, necessary to the one because of his infirmity and followed by the other from a sense of loyalty. But with the advent of Larry Hartley things were never the

same at the rectory, for the small boy and the young dog loved each other at first sight. Youth called to youth; and out of a deep understanding of human-canine needs the elderly priest sacrificed himself that his pet might have a younger master. An easy-to-read story for the fourth grade on. Those who like dogs will find this a treat. Not sentimental, but nicely appreciative of the best in human nature.

Elizabeth M. Beal

Tuck. By Alfred Fluckiger. Illustrated by Grace Huxtable. Coward-McCann, \$2.00.

This story of an Alpine snow hare, translated by Rose Fyleman, catches the color and drama of life high in the Swiss Alps. Written for the older child (and for adults), this book offers an interesting comparison with American animal stories. Though the subject matter is similar, this importation is richer in description, as in the vivid picture of a fox's fight with a hedgehog. The story of Tuck is told with rare descriptive style and straight realism. Details are accurate and the picture of Alpine life reflects first-hand experience.

Herbert S. Zim

The Picture Story of Britain. By Noel Streetfeild. Bell Publishing Company, \$3.00.

This is a book which the reviewer can recommend for use in fifth and sixth grade classes studying history of Great Britain. But the recommendation is made with certain reservations. Many of the sentences are long. Eight pages in the book are set in very small type, which will encourage many children to skip them. And the authors continually use such incorrect phrases as America, to refer to the United States, and Holland, to speak of the Netherlands. Nevertheless, the volume is accurate, inclusive, and enhanced by colorful border designs.

Leonard S. Kenworthy

The Picture Story of Norway. By Hester O'Neill. David McKay, \$2.50.

Norway is one of the countries which can most profitably be studied by elementary school children because of its relatively simple culture,

its similarities to the United States, its peaceful separation from Sweden, its illustration of the effect of a mountainous terrain on ways of living, and its democratic institutions.

This book is a fine addition to the literature for boys and girls on that land. It is comprehensive and yet brief, accurate, and colorful. Its only weaknesses are the width of the lines and the crowded appearance of its pages. It should be enjoyed by many fifth and sixth grade children.

Leonard S. Kenworthy

The Children Downstairs. By Virginia Mazer. Friendship Press, \$2.00.

Children's books on boys and girls in other countries are desperately needed to help develop world-mindedness. But unfortunately this is not the type of book which can be recommended for use in schools. In attempting to escape the usual stereotype of Latin Americans, it creates a new stereotype—the clean, party-dress and suit children from upper middle class families. Even the title of *The Children Downstairs* is likely to mislead children geographically speaking. Books do need to stress similarities between boys and girls of the United States and of other countries, as this book attempts to do. But they also need to be realistic in stressing differences, too, which this volume does not do.

Leonard S. Kenworthy

Children's Games from Many Lands. By Nina Millen. Friendship Press, \$2.00.

The 1951 edition of this old favorite of teachers, parents, and children should be warmly welcomed. Two hundred sixty two games played by the children of fifty-five countries are listed by countries and arranged in sections by geographical areas of the world. In the case of singing games, the melody is included. There is nothing better of its kind for use in recreation periods or in connection with units on individual countries or on children around the world.

Leonard S. Kenworthy

Landmark Books. Random House. 1951. \$1.50.

Ten books of this series were noted in the

January issue of *Elementary English*. Three more are reviewed here.

The Vikings, by Elizabeth Janeway, is a thrilling story of Eric the Red, and his son Leif Ericsson. There is the banishment of Eric from his homeland in Iceland and the consequent discovery of Greenland where he settled with his family. The saga of Leif's voyage to the shores of North America and his explorations in Vineland is told in exciting detail.

With Anne Terry White the reader then goes back to *Prehistoric America*, and learns how scientists unearthed the histories of plants, beasts and man on this continent.

Forward then again into history goes Jim Kjelgaard's story of *The Explorations of Pere Marquette*. The eagerness of the gentle missionary of 1670 to find the Big River to the West matched his zeal to minister to the souls of the Indians of the New World.

His story, with that of his friend, Louis Joliet, is beautifully told.

These three books are a fine addition to historical literature. Written in simple language and dramatically developed they can be used in grades four through six, but older boys and girls and even adults will enjoy reading them.

Elizabeth Guilfoile

The Christmas Stove, a Story of Switzerland, by Alta Halverson Seymour. Wilcox Follett. \$2.50.

This story is planned as the first in a series of books on Christmas customs around the world. It is the tale of two little orphaned Swiss children, Peter and Trudi, who go to live with their impoverished Tante Maria in Zimmerli. Soon Peter finds work with the grocer and the wood-carver, and Trudi, small though she is, proves to be a good baby tender. Christmas at Tante Maria's is a happy one, with the lonely of the village sharing Peter and Trudi's hard-earned hospitality. Though the children's every effort meets with almost incredible suc-

cess, the story has atmosphere and appeal, and is illustrated with many full page ink drawings.

Margaret M. Clark

Album of Horses. By Marguerite Henry. Illustrated by Wesley Dennis. Rand McNally & Co., \$2.95.

For such varied breeds of horses as the Arab and Percheron, the Lipizzan and the Shetland Pony, we are here given distinguishing characteristics and their ancestry, enlivened by anecdotes and by lists of history. Author and illustrator have combined their talents and their love for horses in a beautiful book which will find readers from the fifth grade through high school.

Agnes Krarup

Ban-Joe and Grey Eagle. By Isabel McLennan McMeekin. Jacket by Corinne Boyd Dillon. Franklin Watts, Inc., \$2.50.

A wandering orphan and his dog find a home in a livery stable where lives the fastest horse of 1869 in all Kentucky. Ban-Joe's friend-

ship for the little tomboy daughter of his benefactor and his progress in horsemanship are unfolded with warmth and skill. Unfortunately the double spread illustrations will be ruined in rebinding.

Agnes Krarup

For Younger Children

The First Book of Firemen. By Benjamin Brewster. Pictures by Jeanne Bendick.

\$1.75. *The First Book of Birds.* Written and illustrated by Margaret Williamson. \$1.75. Franklin Watts, Inc.

This First Book Series appears to provide the answers to many of the questions boys and girls ask. Early grade children will enjoy listening to reading from the books. They will study the many illustrations. Although the text of *Firemen* and of *Birds* is concerned with presenting factual materials, it is written for younger children. The text is written on the middle grade reading level.

Paul Hale



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